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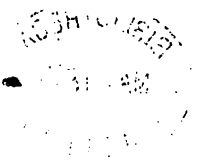
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GUIDE TO
THE PARISH CHURCH

BY THE

BISHOP OF CARLISLE





A GUIDE

TO

The Parish Church,

BY

HARVEY GOODWIN, D.D.,

BISHOP OF CARLISLE.

NEW EDITION: REVISED AND REWRITTEN.

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"I have loved Thy assemblies: I have mourned for the divisions of Thy Church: I have delighted in the brightness of Thy Sanctuary. This vine which Thy right hand hath planted in this nation I have ever prayed unto Thee, that it might have the first and the latter rain; and that it might stretch her branches to the seas and to the floods....Thy creatures have been my books, but Thy Scriptures much more. I have sought Thee in the courts, fields, and gardens, but I have found Thee in Thy temples."

BACON.

PREFACE.

THE first Edition of this little book was published nearly twenty-four years ago; and as more than ten thousand copies of it have been sold, I do not think it necessary, in sending out this revised and rewritten Edition, to explain the reasons which moved me in the first instance to undertake the composition of the work.

It is however necessary to give some account of the difference between the book as it now appears and the book as it has hitherto been printed.

Many changes have taken place since as a Parish Priest I undertook the task of supplying to those who desired such help a humble Guide to the Parish Church. The average tone and character of Parish Church worship is undeniably different from what it was then. *Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.* But my little book being printed, indeed for some

years past stereotyped, did not change with the times; and I could not but feel as I sometimes looked over my own pages, that remarks founded upon the condition of things existing when I wrote my book, and which I could justify by reference to my own experience and observation, were gradually becoming unsuitable in consequence of the practical reforms, or at all events the changes, which had taken place.

It is difficult to determine the precise moment at which the remodelling of a book in extensive circulation ought to take place; and I might perhaps have granted to my little volume, antiquated as it might possibly be regarded in some points, a longer undisturbed existence had it not been for a cause which I will briefly explain.

In the Guide to the Parish Church I had naturally devoted a section to the consideration of the Vestures used in divine service. In that section I wrote as follows:

"This rule," that is the Ornaments' Rubric, "if carried out, would involve the use of several vestures of which the greater number of attendants at the Parish Church have never heard,

such as the vestment, the cope, the tunicle, the albe; some of these are even now used upon very special occasions, and strictly speaking they ought to be used in all Parish Churches, for this is one of those things which each branch of Christ's Church may fairly regulate according to its own discretion, and in our own case the rule quoted above has been deliberately made and has never yet been repealed. Nevertheless it is manifest that any attempt on the part of individual ministers to alter that form of vesture, which has become usual in the English Church, would be most mischievous and useless; in a matter of this kind it signifies little how things have come into their present state; if the state in which they are be not absolutely bad, injurious to the character of public worship, destructive to Christian devotion, then rubrics must give way to custom, at all events until the whole question can be carefully reviewed by proper authority and order taken thereupon."

Since these words were written a violent vestiarian controversy has raged, and the Ornaments' Rubric has been examined both by Courts of Law and in divers other ways, so as it never was examined before. The result has

been that the highest judicial authorities have declared that the interpretation of the Ornaments' Rubric as above given is incorrect, and that when properly understood it only authorises the Surplice in Parish Churches with the use of a Cope in Cathedrals. But besides this, my own examination of the subject has guided me to the conclusion, that the interpretation which the Courts have put upon the Ornaments' Rubric is most probably the true one. I say *most probably*, because the Rubric when carefully studied in its historical connection is undoubtedly obscure, and the interpretation must necessarily rest upon a balance of probabilities.

The view given by me of the Ornaments' Rubric did not appear to myself as having any very important practical bearing, partly because I could not expect my little plain uncontroversial book to be ever quoted as an authority upon such a matter, partly because I had expressed myself so strongly against the introduction of obsolete vestures, even though they might claim the sanction of the written law of the Church of England. I found however not long since, that my opinion and authority were solemnly claimed in favour of the legality

of the Edwardian vestures, as they are sometimes called; and when this took place it seemed to me that the time was come, when the suppression of an opinion which I no longer held became imperatively necessary.

I do not think that I ought to trouble the reader of such a book as this Guide to the Parish Church with arguments concerning the interpretation of a document, which has given rise to so much controversy. He will find when he comes to the chapter on vestures, that I have omitted the passage, quoted above from the first Edition, but that I have substituted no other interpretation, confining myself simply to remarks arising out of the ordinary usage of the Church of England, and so preserving that practical tone which I have ever desired to make a characteristic of the Guide to the Parish Church.

Having determined to recall the book as it had previously existed, I further determined entirely to rewrite and recast the book. It seemed to me that in this way I could best deal with the general change of feeling and practice with regard to public worship, to which I have already referred, and avoid the danger of pro-

ducing a book bearing evident signs of having been patched. This plan also offered the additional advantage of enabling me to make such insertions and additions, and to introduce such miscellaneous modifications, as may have been in any way suggested to my mind by the more varied experience which has fallen to my lot since the work was originally offered to the Church.

The "Guide to the Parish Church" therefore goes forth once again, as announced upon its title page, "revised and rewritten". In some sense it may claim to be a new book; but it is substantially the same, and it appeals to precisely the same class of readers as before. To use words which occur in the Preface to the first Edition: "If the perusal of the book such as it is should lead any members of the English Church to a higher sense of their privileges, and a more reverent as well as more intelligent participation in the public worship of God, my end in writing it will have been attained."

H. CARLISLE.

ROSE CASTLE,
Advent, 1878.

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A GUIDE
TO THE PARISH CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

"O how amiable are Thy dwellings, Thou Lord of Hosts." Psalm lxxxiv. 1.

GUIDE Books are plentiful in our days. There is scarcely a country you can desire to visit, for which you cannot purchase a Guide. Very useful such books are found to be. They give you information concerning the best mode of reaching the country, the means of travelling in it, the manners and customs of the inhabitants, the historical events of interest connected with it, and other important points. Many persons who travel in foreign parts, and who without such a companion as a Handbook would reap little advantage from their journeyings, frequently by help of such a book return home really better and wiser for what they have seen.

May we not take a hint from this with regard to that journey which we so frequently

make, namely, from our homes to the Parish Church? Probably there is scarcely any journey which in general is made with less previous preparation, and which in fact requires more. The reason why a person visiting foreign countries finds it necessary to study books containing information concerning them is this:—that the history, the manners, the customs, the ways of thinking belonging to those countries are different from those belonging to his own; and unless he studies the differences he may easily shew great ignorance or indulge foolish narrow prejudices, and so may be the worse rather than the better for leaving home. Is not the same thing true of the Parish Church? It too has its history and its manners and customs, which require to be studied and understood. There may be many things done in the Parish Church, which to an ignorant untutored mind may seem strange or unprofitable or even offensive, but which to the understanding sympathetic worshipper may be most instructive and edifying: and there may be things which do not seem strange in consequence of long habit, and which nevertheless convey little or no meaning because no trouble has been taken to understand them. And though some portions of the Church service are more simple than others, still it may be asserted with truth that there is no portion

which will not bear and repay careful study, and that the whole of the public worship of the Church will shine with a new and bright light, as soon as the worshipper takes the work in hand of thoroughly studying and understanding what it is that he is doing.

What a wrong impression may result, when either the proper sources of information are wanting, or the proper effort to understand the peculiarities of the place we are visiting have not been made! Conceive the condition of a person suddenly placed in the midst of an English Court of justice, without any explanation of the meaning of what is going on, the arrangement of the building, the costumes of the officials, the processes of a civil or criminal trial. A person so situated would have but a meagre account to give of the principles of English law: his visit to the court would be almost utterly unprofitable: he would probably be surprised when he was told that he had witnessed a scene which was the chief glory of a free state.

So also, if persons scamper through a country as rapidly as steam can carry them, and then undertake to give an account of their travels, it may be easily believed that their experience and opinions will be of not much value. This has sometimes been done, and the result is

very ridiculous: the people of the country which the casual visitors have undertaken to describe scarcely recognize the description at all.

Now there are good reasons why all this should be true of the Parish Church more than of almost any other place. For the customs are ancient and the habits peculiar; and moreover the inhabitants belong, or profess to belong, to a very distant country, and they speak a language not easily intelligible to the inhabitants of this world. Yet the ways and doings of the Parish Church are better worth understanding than almost anything else to which we can devote our study: at the same time there is a temptation to treat the subject with carelessness and neglect, just because it is so familiar and so constantly before us.

But it is the character of all things really sterling and good to improve upon close acquaintance. A good picture often disappoints at first, and only exhibits its greatness after repeated study and the expenditure of much thought. Good music can be understood by few persons at first hearing: light merry airs please uncultivated ears more than the deeper works of genius; yet to those who are capable of judging there is in great musical works a fulness and satisfaction which common melody does not possess. Poetry, architecture, sculpture, all

illustrate the same point. And to take quite a different illustration, old friends are best, because we have had time to study their goodness; and the value of a friend is best proved by the manner in which our love for him increases, as we know him longer and are acquainted with him more intimately.

Is it wonderful if such a principle should apply to Public Worship? Is it strange that what is good and sterling in this class should require study and understanding, before its excellence can be appreciated? or if ignorant and shallow persons should find fault? or if young persons without experience should be captivated by that which does not approve itself to the judgment of their mature years?

Having such thoughts as these in my mind, I purpose to set down in the following pages a few hints concerning the public service of the English Church. Some of them will apply to public service of any kind: others will have reference exclusively to our own. Some will be intended to give help to those who need it, concerning the most fitting manner of conducting themselves in God's House and of joining in the worship: others will have more particularly in view the end of pointing out the excellence of the arrangements for worship in the Church of England. The whole will serve,

as I hope, for a kind of Manual of Public Worship, or "Guide to the Parish Church."

In carrying out this purpose, I am not bound to maintain, and I shall not attempt to prove, that in every minute particular the public service of the Church of England, either considered according to the ideal set forth in the Book of Common Prayer, or as exhibited in ordinary practice, is ordered absolutely in the best manner possible. I should very much weaken my case if I attempted to do this. Is it likely, when we consider the troubles through which the Church of England at the epoch of her great reformation had to pass, and the obstacles with which she has had to contend since, that her service should be in every particular, either theoretically or practically, the very best that could possibly be devised? Is it likely that a ship, which has weathered all the gales to which the Church of England has been exposed, should be found on being examined not to have lost a spar, nor to have strained a rivet, nor even to have been damaged in her mere external appearance? Any one who studies the question carefully will probably be astonished to find how little irreparable loss she has actually sustained. Many things which we might at first be inclined to condemn, we may eventually see reason to praise; and in all we shall shew only a duti-

ful discretion, if we are slow to condemn that which wiser persons than ourselves have approved.

But anyhow I am not going to undertake the defence of every minute particular in the service of the English Church; or rather I am not going to attempt to prove that everything is as near perfection as possible. It would be well that all persons should remember, that it is by no means necessary that a member of the English Church should be prepared to prove the excellence of every order and practice and custom. The Church's children may be devotedly attached to their spiritual mother without committing themselves to this; and it would be better for those who are dissatisfied with the Church of England to endeavour to remove what they deem amiss, by remaining in her communion, making their light to shine within her walls, and giving such advice and aid as they may be able to give, than to desert her and speak ill of her, and even endeavour to destroy her. In this little book, however, I shall be concerned chiefly with the general structure and character of the service of the Church; and whether these be perfection or not, I am well convinced there is no service on this side Heaven in which we can join, more worthy of its great purpose.

Some persons will perhaps object to the

notion of making public worship a matter for rules and directions, or of discussing it as such. They may say, as has often been said, that prayer to God is the work of the heart, and that true prayer can only be taught by the Holy Spirit; that the best preparation for public worship is to fall down on our knees, and say, as the disciples did, "Lord, teach us to pray!" and that the Christian worshipper who is taught of God needs no other teaching. This is all true in a certain sense, but it is not the whole truth. The Holy Spirit helps our infirmities; but He does not give help to enable us to be idle or to encourage presumption. Our Lord Jesus Christ, when His disciples asked Him to teach them to pray, did not tell them to trust to the inspiration of the moment, but taught them a set form. S. Paul too says much concerning the order necessary to be observed in the Church; and when orders and rules have been once settled, the way to avoid formality is to fall in with the forms established by those orders and rules, or it may be fixed by custom. Those known commonly as Quakers, but who call themselves the Society of Friends, are a warning in this matter. No one can doubt that the members of this society are, for good or for evil, the most formal persons in existence; and yet they began by protesting against all forms.

They did not see that whatever being innocent has become customary, ought not to be condemned as formal. The greatest formalist is he, who in opposition to usual forms sets up other forms of his own.

The truth is, as regards public worship, that it is necessary for the sake of decency and order and edification that everything should be carefully prescribed and arranged. We must in fact have some kind of ritual. There may be more or less of external ceremony, but some kind of prescribed order every congregation of worshippers must necessarily have. And any one who would thoroughly understand the Church service and profit by it, ought to study the rules which the Book of Common Prayer contains and endeavour to comply with them. Of course, if any one imagines that a careful attention to forms and a compliance with rules can supply the place of heart-felt piety, or the grace of the Holy Spirit, he grossly deceives himself. But surely cases of such self-deception are not very common; at all events, dear reader, if you suspect the author of this little book of intending so to mislead you, to teach you how you may worship God acceptably without that preparation of heart which comes from the Lord, to substitute a devotion of posture and form for the true devotion of the heart,—pray

shut up the book at once, and burn it. Indeed, I should scarcely have thought it necessary to provide against the suspicion of an attempt to substitute any human appliances for the work of the Holy Spirit, were it not certain that such a suspicion is sometimes entertained by good and pious people. Possibly the attempt may sometimes be made: there is nothing too foolish to find some hand to undertake it: but I am quite conscious that no such attempt will be made in this book, and the most that I desire is to help in the building of an altar and the preparing of a sacrifice, upon which the fire of the Lord may fall.

CHAPTER II.

ATTENDANCE ON PUBLIC WORSHIP.

"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the House of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools."

Eccles. v. 1.

GEORGE HERBERT says, in his own quaint way—

"Though private prayer be a brave design,
Yet public hath more promises, more love;
And love's a weight to hearts, to eyes a sign.
We are all but cold suitors; let us move
Where it is warmest. Leave thy six and seven;
Pray with the most: for where most pray is Heaven."

And in the same spirit Jeremy Taylor writes; "Private devotions, and secret offices of religion, are like refreshing of a garden with the distilling and petty drops of a waterpot; but addresses to the temple, and serving God in the public communion of saints, is like rain from Heaven, where the offices are described by a public spirit, heightened by the greater portions of assistance, and receive advantages

by the adunations and symbols of charity, and increment by their distinct title to promises appropriate even to their assembling, and mutual support, by the piety of example, by the communication of counsels, by the awfulness of public observation, and the engagements of holy customs." And again, "It is a persecution, when we are forced from public worshippings; no man can hinder our private addresses to God; every man can build a chapel in his breast, and himself be the priest, and his heart the sacrifice, and every foot of glebe he treads on, be the altar: and this no tyrant can prevent. If, then, there can be persecution in the offices of religion, it is the prohibition of public profession and communions; and, therefore, he that denies to himself the opportunities of public rites and conventions is his own persecutor[1]."

I do not know that it is necessary to enter into any reasoning to prove that attendance on public worship is both a duty and a privilege, because amongst those who have any earnest feeling about religion, there will scarcely be found one who does not shew by his practice that he admits the duty while he rejoices in the privilege. Nevertheless, it may not be amiss

[1] *Life of our Lord Jesus Christ*, Part I. Section 7.

to say something concerning the true idea of public worship; the more so as many good people seem to betray defective views on the subject, and not a few whom it would be uncharitable to describe as other than good people would appear to have lost the distinct conception of public worship, as worship, altogether.

An indication of such defective views is to be found in the not uncommon phrase of "going to *hear*" this clergyman or that, instead of going to worship in the church in which the clergyman in question officiates. And not many years ago, though I trust and believe the phraseology is not so common now, it was quite usual to describe the incumbency of a clergyman in a particular Church by saying that he *preached* in it. "Who preaches at S. John's?" was the common form of the question, "Who officiates at S. John's?" Little phrases such as these exhibit in the clearest manner the thoughts which lie beneath. They are phrases founded upon the assumption that the great end, and that which on account of its predominant importance may be taken, as expressing the whole purpose, of churchgoing, is to hear sermons[1].

[1] It is curious to note that the Roman Catholic speaks of *hearing mass;* thus, even though preaching be not unduly magnified, *hearing* can be substituted for true worship.

And it is not uncommon to find persons who, by mouth and pen, openly support this view. It is sometimes set down, for example, as a distinction between the purposes of the house of God in the Romish Church and in the Church of England respectively; that in the latter the house is a meetinghouse, a place of teaching, a religious school, while in the former it is this only in an inferior degree, being chiefly and primarily the scene of solemn rites and ceremonies.

Now it is not the intention of this book by any means to disparage the importance of Christian preaching. The opportunity, which is given to a Christian Minister, of instructing the minds and stirring up the hearts of his people from the pulpit, can scarcely be overrated as to its importance. Every one who has at all considered the influence, which a man is able to produce upon his fellows by that marvellous gift of God, the power of speech, will be persuaded that as long as the world lasts, one great engine of spiritual good will be the public addresses of Christian teachers[1]. Especially will they

[1] "Amazing faculty! that I can now stand in the midst of a thronging assembly, and use the air which we breathe to convey to every one the thoughts which crowd the hidden chambers of my soul! That I can knock therewith at every man's conscience and heart; transposing myself, as it were, into those inapproach-

hold a high view of the importance of preaching, who believe that Christ's Ministers really receive a spiritual gift by the laying on of Apostolic hands. "Take thou authority," says the Bishop to each newly ordained Priest, "to preach the Word of God;" and nothing can be more foolish or indefensible than for any Minister to make light of this part of his office; nor is it easy to believe that any earnest man could be found who would not shrink from the thought of doing so.

This, be it observed, is no question of peculiar doctrine, or of party opinion. Whatever views a clergyman may hold within the broad limits which the Church of England sanctions, a man who is permitted to stand up and exhort his brethren with all the advantages which can possibly be devised,—the certainty of respectful attention, the solemnizing preparatory effect of public prayer, the holy atmosphere of a Church, the peace belonging to the Lord's day,—and who does not make use of these advantages for the purpose of warning and exhorting and edifying his brethren with all his

able solitudes, filling them with the images which are passing to and fro in my own spirit, and causing kindred forms to rise and stir in hundreds that are round me! Yea, speech is wonderful, but not wonderful to describe itself." MELVILLE, *Sermon before the University of Cambridge*, 1839.

heart and soul,—what is such a man? Whatever he be, he is strangely unfit for the office which he holds as a minister to his brethren in spiritual things, a watchman for the Church, an ambassador for God, a worker together with Christ.

Magnify preaching however as much as we may, still it is a most imperfect view of public worship to consider it as nearly the same thing as going to hear sermons.

> "Resort to sermons, but to prayers most:
> Praying's the end of preaching[1]."

That this has been the tendency in England in past time, and is so to a great extent now, can scarcely be questioned; and there are many who little suspect themselves of defective religious views, who nevertheless do practically regard going to Church as going to hear sermons. It will not be amiss then to set down a few remarks upon what may be considered to be the true idea of public worship; they cannot exhaust the subject, but they may be a help to those who wish sincerely and simply to worship God in their Parish Church.

In the first place, then, God's House, though in a very true sense a house of preaching, is more emphatically a House of Prayer. The book which we use in God's House is called the

[1] George Herbert.

"Book of Common Prayer." Reader, did you ever consider with yourself what is meant by that title of the book which we more familiarly call the "Prayer-book"? The true name—for it is the true name, as you will see by looking at the title-page,—namely, the "Book of Common Prayer," is worthy of being noticed, because it really contains in itself the very pith and marrow of the question now under consideration. Prayer in the Church is *common* prayer, prayer from the whole body or community of Christ's people, prayer for *common* blessings, thanksgiving for a *common* redemption[1].

The public service of the Church, be it observed, is not like the private prayers of the members of the congregation all added together. We must not regard a Christian congregation as so many persons who have agreed to say their prayers together occasionally in the same place and at the same time. There is a meaning in public worship distinct from and higher than

[1] There is a tendency to give to the word *common* the sense of *having little value*, and to forget its primary signification. The manner in which one signification leads to the other will be seen from the following extract from Richardson's *Dictionary*.

Common, Belonging or pertaining to one as well as another; to many; to the public in general. Frequently met with, and therefore easily obtained; and thus of little or no value, no rank or distinction.

this. The two things differ not in degree only, but in kind. Jesus Christ our Lord is the head, not of a number of disjointed limbs, but of a living body compacted together; and the congregation of the faithful in Church is the living body of Christians, met together in their corporate character. Take an illustration. The aldermen and councillors of a corporate town may happen to be all assembled in one room; but the assembly is not on that account a meeting of the Town Council. A chance meeting of this sort would be altogether different in its nature from a regularly appointed meeting of the body as a body. Christians form a body, knit together by close bonds, all being members one of another, all owning one head, even the Lord Jesus Christ. How is this union exhibited? what is its outward mark? where is it that Christians are to be found specially *as* Christians? I reply, that in the *common* worship of God in Church, and there only, they testify to themselves and to others their common life and their common redemption. No man has a merely private interest in the Saviour. Christ did not die to save a few individual souls, but to found a kingdom, to establish a Church, to become the head of a redeemed body. Therefore however good a man may be, however well instructed, however diligent in private prayer, he cannot occupy

his proper position as a member of Christ's ransomed Church, if he "forsakes the assembling together[1]" of Christ's people in Christ's own presence chamber.

But again, God's House is not only a house of Prayer; it is also a house of Sacraments. I have spoken of Christians meeting together for common prayer, without any reference hitherto to the fact that they meet in their public assemblies for the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, because I think that without any such reference the argument is good and satisfactory. I feel sure that the more we consider the real nature of the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ and the manner in which it is described in Holy Scripture, the more we shall see the absurdity and impossibility of what may be called private Christianity, and the absolute necessity of common prayer in a body constituted as is the Christian Church. But the argument is greatly enforced, when we take into account the fact of the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ being a part of the public worship of Christians. In fact, when I quoted in a former paragraph from the title-page of the Prayer-book, and described the title as being more

[1] Hebrews x. 25.

correctly the "Book of Common Prayer," I might have given the quotation more fully thus: "The Book of Common Prayer, and *administration of the Sacraments*, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, according to the use of the Church of England." The celebration of the great Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, it must ever be remembered, is one of the chief features of Christian worship. It is Christ's own institution. It is the very thing which beyond all others brought the early Christians together on the first day of the week: they came together on that day "to break bread[1]," that is, to celebrate the Lord's Supper; and for a Christian to have absented himself from the Holy Communion would in primitive times have been considered as almost equivalent to giving up his Christian profession.

Now Communion, as the word implies, is no private thing. It is the joining in one for a certain purpose of a whole body, or community. And though a man may pray by himself and may read the Bible or any other good books by himself, yet by himself he cannot celebrate the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ; this is a social act, a work for a congregation,—not necessarily a large one, two or three may

[1] Acts xx. 7.

suffice if no more can be found, and Christ will be present with those two or three,—but a congregational act it essentially is, and one which stamps upon public service a power of conferring grace and blessing beyond anything which private devotion can confer. The Church of England has been very careful to insist upon this character of the Sacrament, as against the private Masses of the Church of Rome, by ordering that there shall be no celebration, "except there be a convenient number to communicate with the Priest, according to his discretion[1]."

Here then is another and a very strong reason why the Christian should go regularly to God's House: a reason, I grant, which the laxity of modern times has in many parishes weakened to a most grievous extent,—shame upon us that it should be so! I grant that when the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is seldom administered—three or four times, it may be, in the course of the year; I trust such cases are now rare, but they do exist—it may seem fantastical to set the partaking of this blessed food in the forefront of the reasons which should bring Christ's people together.

[1] Rubric at the end of "The Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion."

But I speak of that which ought to be and which (thankGod) is being realized continually in more and more of the Parish Churches throughout the land: and supposing a frequent celebration of the Holy Communion (if we would be primitive and apostolical it should be every Lord's day[1]), I may well count this amongst the peculiar blessings, which Christians must come to seek in the public worship of the Church.

In few words then, the house of God, besides being a house of preaching and teaching, is also a house of *Common Prayer*, and especially a house of *Common Sacraments*. These are two definite characters which belong to the Church, and which ought to lead Christians thither to worship God. I have not laid much stress upon the argument which George Herbert uses in the verse quoted above, in which he says,

> "Leave thy six and seven,
> Pray with the most: for where most pray is Heaven."

I think however that the thought contained in these lines supplies a very good argu-

[1] "Sunday and Festival celebration,...may safely be affirmed to be, as a general rule, the prescript for the Church, and to exhibit with the greatest fidelity the true purpose and character of the Holy Eucharist ...Such a view, I venture to assert, not merely the nature of the thing, but the practice of the Church in

ment. What is intended is to bring to mind the contagion which belongs to devotional as to all other strong feelings. It is easier to keep up the attention when surrounded by hearty worshippers. The solemn *Amen* from a whole congregation, which seems almost to force an Amen from the heart and lips of any one who might have felt indifferent, the soothing character of Church Music, the effect of the example of those whom we reverence and whom we see worshipping with ourselves, even the very atmosphere of the place, the place in which (it may be) our fathers have worshipped, in which everything connects us with the memory of those who have departed in the faith of Christ, and in which there is much to warn us of the time of our own decease, the place in which we or our children have been baptized, in which perhaps we were confirmed, in which we first joined in the Holy Communion,—all these things and a hundred others like them give to the public worship of the Church an advantage over any kind of private devotion, which a person must be very coldhearted not

the earliest and purest ages, her sad experience in all later and less clear-sighted ones, and certain of her disciplinary rules at all times, entirely fall in with." *Freeman's Principles of Divine Service*, Vol. I. Chap. ii. § 2.

to perceive and acknowledge. I have however not rested upon such arguments, because their strength depends to a great extent upon taste and feeling; whereas I have desired to shew that the necessity and excellence of public worship depend upon nothing of the kind, but rather upon the first elementary principles upon which the Church of Christ is founded.

Many practical conclusions manifestly follow from the view of public worship which has been given; and much neglect of public worship, and abuse of the privileges which people enjoy in the possession of a Parish Church, would probably be avoided, if the principles which have been expounded were generally received and consistently acted upon.

For example, persons somewhat deaf and who have consequently a difficulty in hearing the sermon would not on that account absent themselves from the Parish Church, and imagine their presence to be useless. Common Prayer and Common Sacraments remain, even when the advantage of the Sermon is lost. A deaf old woman, who was a very regular Churchgoer, and was asked why she went to Church when she could hear nothing that went on, hit the right nail on the head, when she replied, pointing upwards, "*He* knows that I am there!"

Again, persons who take the right view of

public worship will not run about from one Church to another, seeking the stimulus of a new preacher. This little book professes to be a Guide to the *Parish* Church; but it is impossible not to perceive that in many large towns, and especially in London, the position of the Parish Church as such, and the parochial feeling of attachment to it, have been very much broken down in recent years, chiefly by the multiplication of Churches and the variety of the tone of service adopted in them. Hence in large towns it is not easy to speak of the overwhelming claims of the Parish Church, as it is in country places: but under all circumstances "itching ears" are evil things[1], and the habit of gadding about from one Church to another, either to hear a new preacher or in search of any other kind of religious excitement, is unfavourable to the development of the true Christian character, and will be avoided by those who take a really sound view of the meaning and principles of public worship.

Once more, persons who take this sound view will feel disposed, after leaving Church, not so much to criticize the sermon or the music or the ritual, as to inquire how far they have themselves worshipped God in spirit and in

[1] See Chapter XIX.

truth. It is a matter for solemn reflection, whether the growth of true vital godliness amongst us has at all kept pace in recent years with the increase of the abundance and variety of the public means of grace. Judging from the increased number and beauty of our Churches, the improved character of our services, and the place which public worship occupies in the minds of Church people as compared with that which it occupied in years gone by, we might conclude that practical religion was also very much increased and strengthened. It is sincerely to be trusted that it is so; but it must not be forgotten that every age has its peculiar difficulties, and the Churchgoer in our own days has probably especial reason for inquiring whether his religion is one of external observance or one of heart-felt practical piety.

Many other conclusions may be drawn from the principles which I have endeavoured to expound, concerning the duties connected with public worship; the preceding are only specimens. I sincerely trust that the reader of this book will agree with me that the view given of public worship and its duties is the true one; otherwise he will not be able to sympathize with his Guide in the greater part of that which is to follow.

CHAPTER III.

PRAYER BEFORE DIVINE SERVICE.

"Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."
Exod. iii. 5.

THERE is a custom so prevalent in English Churches as to be almost universal, and a very excellent custom too, namely, that of offering up a private prayer immediately upon assuming a place in the Church. I believe that in almost all Churches a person who should take his seat without first appearing at least to offer a prayer would be regarded as ignorant and rude, if not something worse.

Nevertheless, as in many other cases, there would sometimes appear to be too much of custom and too little of reality in the practice; and not unfrequently a man seems as if he were reading in the crown of his hat, which he holds before his face, rather than as if he were engaged in prayer. But the practice itself is a

most wise and holy one, and commends itself to our judgment as appropriate and decent, not to say necessary. For the success of public worship depending (as it does) upon the present help of God's Holy Spirit, we cannot too soon after our entrance into God's House ask His blessing upon the work, which we are about to take in hand; soon we shall have to join with others in the public expression of prayer and praise, and in order that we may not be left behind in zeal and spirit by our fellow-worshippers, it is well to seek God's preventing grace, and that right early.

Moreover, if we could fully realize the character of a Church as being the presence-chamber of the Most High, the place where His honour dwelleth, the house where He has been pleased to put His name, the guest-chamber where Christ meets His disciples and sups with them, we should also feel that a posture of reverence befitted a suitor in this presence-chamber. It is no superstition but a wholesome and reasonable feeling, I would almost call it a human instinct, which invests Churches with a solemn character, and which would teach us to fall down and ask God's mercy whenever we are called upon to enter them. A Church is no doubt most emphatically the presence-chamber of God, when the members of the living

Church gather together to seek Him there: but even an empty Church is a solemn place; it is a house consecrated to God; and a Christian may feel that even for private devotion a Church has rare advantages; nay, in some of our crowded towns a poor man or woman will probably have no place for quiet retirement and private prayer, if the Church be not open for the purpose. But apart from this, private devotion is the proper preparation for public; and it may be safely said, that he will never reap the full benefit of public prayer, who has not first prepared himself by asking the assistance of God's Holy Spirit.

The general prevalence of the custom of which I have spoken shews that this is felt to be true. There is no need therefore to recommend and enforce the introduction of a practice which already is well-nigh universal. Nevertheless I may, without danger of wasting the reader's time, suggest that the manner of prayer before public worship is apparently in the case of many Christians not quite what it should be, and I can also do him a service by presenting him with a few appropriate prayers.

When, Christian reader, you come into God's house for public worship, remember that you have a difficult task to perform, difficult at least if it is to be performed well. I have heard good and holy people confess that they have felt the

due performance of public worship to be the most difficult thing to do well of all the things which they have been called upon to do. You have to remove, if possible, from your mind all worldly thoughts, and to hold yourself in the attitude in which you would hold yourself if you were one of a body of persons admitted into the presence of your Sovereign, to acknowledge great benefits received, and to ask for new gifts and blessings. This is not easy. Satan will strive to prevent you from obtaining a blessing if he can, and only God's Spirit can so influence your mind as to bring it into tune with the minds of Angels and Archangels, who without weariness and without distraction continually worship God. Kneel down then on coming into Church; and offer up with all earnestness some such prayers as the following.

Lord, let me behold Thee in this Thy Sanctuary, and see Thy power and glory! For Thy loving-kindness is better than life itself, therefore my lips shall praise Thee. As long as I live will I magnify Thee in this manner, and lift up my hands in Thy Name. O satisfy me with the riches of Thy mercy which are in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

This is the House of God, this is the gate of

Heaven! Give me grace, O Heavenly Father, to remember that I am in Thy presence. May our prayers and praises rise before Thee as sweet incense; and do Thou hear from Heaven Thy dwelling-place, and when Thou hearest forgive, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

O how amiable are Thy dwellings, Thou Lord of Hosts! My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord; my flesh and my heart rejoice in Thee, O most merciful and gracious God! Hear my prayers which I offer up to Thee in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Almighty and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our infirmities; and in all our dangers and necessities, stretch out Thy right hand to help and defend us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[The following set of prayers for the private use of worshippers are from Bishop Ken's *Manual.*]

Before Church Time.

O my God, I humbly beseech Thee to prepare my soul to worship Thee this day acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. Fill me with that fear which works by love. Purify my heart from all vain and worldly or sinful

thoughts. Fix my affections on things above all the day long. And, O Lord, give me grace to receive Thy word, which I shall hear this day, with an honest and good heart, and to bring forth fruit with patience. Hear me, O God, for the sake of Jesus Christ my Saviour. Amen.

In the Church.

O Lord, I humbly beg Thy Holy Spirit to help my infirmities at this time, and to dispose my heart to devotion, that my prayers and praises may be acceptable in Thy sight, through Jesus Christ my Saviour. Amen.

After Church time.

Glory be to Thee, O Lord God Almighty! Glory to Thee, who hast permitted me to appear before Thee this day and to tread Thy courts! Lord, pardon all my failings in Thy service this day past, the wanderings and coldness and indevotion of my prayers; for the sake of my blessed Saviour have mercy upon me. Lord, make me a doer of Thy word, and not a hearer only, lest I deceive my own soul. Amen.

It may be well to observe, in connection with the subject of private preparatory prayer, that a variety of practice exists in our Churches

with respect to the introduction of divine service. In simple village churches the commencement of the service is generally as informal as possible: the Clergyman comes in from the vestry perhaps quite unaccompanied and takes his place, and soon begins to read the introductory sentences. Whereas in many of our town churches, and sometimes in villages too, the entrance of the Clergyman or Clergymen is a matter of some state and solemnity: probably the choir precede, and the Clergy and choristers may be all robed in surplices. It is not for me to lay down any rule with regard to these variations: what may be possible or suitable in one place may be impossible or unsuitable in another; but it is well for worshippers to bear in mind that the arrangements for divine service are matters of indifference, provided that all things be done decently and in order. In his own Parish Church a worshipper knows the ways of the place: if he should chance to worship in another church, with the ways of which he is not so familiar, his wisdom is to conform as closely as possible to that which he observes the other worshippers to do. Thus, for example, the custom may be, that when the Clergy and choir enter, all the congregation rise, and that when they have reached their places, the whole body, Clergy, choir and con-

gregation, all fall upon their knees and engage in silent prayer: when this is so, a stranger should adapt himself to the habits of the people amongst whom he worships. Absolute uniformity in such matters throughout all our churches is neither necessary nor desirable, nor even possible.

CHAPTER IV.

EARLY ATTENDANCE IN CHURCH.

"I made haste, and prolonged not the time, to keep Thy commandments."
Psalm cxix. 60.

AFTER what has been said in the preceding Chapter, it might seem almost unnecessary, or even insulting to the reader, to lay stress upon the maxim, Be at Church in good time! Yet there is undoubtedly a bad habit in which some persons allow themselves, of not being in the Church at the commencement of the service. I suppose that all those who indulge the habit, while they would acknowledge that it was a bad one, would plead something in their own case by way of excuse: necessary duties, attention to families, and the like, will probably be the reasons assigned.

Of course more allowance can be made for some persons than for others. With some the irregularity arises from mere carelessness about the service, from a want of sense of the importance and dignity of public worship; they are

thinking about other matters, and if when the proper time comes for going to Church they happen to be ready—well; if not, they will present themselves as soon after the bells have ceased to chime as they conveniently can. There are others who find it necessary to plan skilfully and exert themselves vigorously, in order that they may be in their places when the service begins: such are persons who are heads of large families, domestic servants in houses where there is much necessary work, and probably many others. Persons who are late from carelessness are manifestly much more blameable than those, who have to make a genuine effort in order that they may serve God aright; the former deserve reproof, the latter need encouragement.

Be the causes of late attendance however what they may, the thing itself is one of most evil kind, injurious to the character of public worship, a disturbance to others, a loss and a mischief to the persons themselves. And though I am far from denying that there are cases in which early attendance in God's house is impossible, yet I believe that the evil of being late might often be avoided by care and diligence, and that it often would be avoided if the full extent of the evil were sufficiently considered.

Perhaps it may be worth while to note that

the habit of coming late to Church has been much fostered by the common practice of assigning seats to Parishioners, as if they were their own property, and practically giving them the power of excluding others even when they are not present themselves. The true notion of appropriation, and there are comparatively few exceptions to the rule, is that a seat is assigned by the Churchwardens, or by other ecclesiastical authority, to a person or a family for use and not for mere possession; so that even when an assignment has taken place, the Churchwardens may still put other persons into a seat, if the persons to whom it has been assigned be not there. In not a few Churches the system of appropriation has been abandoned altogether, and in such cases those who desire to attend divine service usually take care to be at Church in time. The old notion however of possessing a seat, and of being able to take our own time in going to occupy it, has undoubtedly had a very evil influence, and one which has by no means passed away[1].

There are several ways in which the evil of

[1] The following rules, drawn up for the use of Churchwardens in the Diocese of Carlisle, may be worthy of attention.

I. The Parish Church is, in its use, the property of the whole Parish; and the Inhabitants, generally, have all an equal right in it. None may be refused

late attendance in Church may be regarded, and though they are very different from one another in kind, they all deserve serious attention.

admission; all have a claim to have a place found for them; no distinction may be made.

II. The Churchwardens, as the Officers of the Ordinary, and at the same time Guardians of the interests of the Parish, have, under the Ordinary, the sole appointment and arrangement. They are to act, to the best of their judgment, and without favour, to the best advantage of all.

III. In certain exceptional cases personal claims may be recognized. They are very few, and are of three kinds,—of Faculty, of Prescription, and of Possession. Even these claims do not constitute the holders of seats absolute proprietors; they protect them against intrusion and give them the privilege of occupation, but they do not destroy the right of the Churchwardens, in case of necessity, to make temporary appointments.

IV. The Churchwardens will do well to remember that no claim can be admitted by Faculty, Prescription, or Possession, unless it be confined to residence; the privilege belongs to the person or persons so long as resident; or, in the case of a seat attached to a house, to the person or persons who are occupiers of the house.

V. The Churchwardens should not permit parishioners to repair the seats which they occupy; the fact of having repaired a seat may seem to give a claim to proprietorship, which claim cannot be allowed.

VI. Where a family is large, and sufficient to occupy a whole pew, the Churchwardens may so appoint; but they should be careful to make it understood that the right or privilege will continue only so long as the pew is fully occupied. They may also assign parts of pews, such as single or other seats.

Looking upon the Church as the presence-chamber of God's Majesty, a place in which God waits to be gracious and to manifest Himself in a special manner to the "two or three" who are met together in His Name, we may say that want of punctuality in attendance argues disrespect to God. Those who offend in the manner of which I am speaking probably do not intend disrespect; but they certainly would not act in the same manner if attending the court of their Sovereign, and the only reason why they do not perceive that they are acting disrespectfully, is that they do not sufficiently regard the Church as the place of God's peculiar presence. If a worshipper in an English Church has the same feeling concerning public worship that the Psalmist had when he wrote the words, "I was glad when they said unto me, We will go up unto the House of the Lord," if Church bells are to him angels' music, if he regards himself when walking to Church as going to seek God's presence, and as sure to receive God's promised blessing, it will be no trifle that will be the cause of his loitering in when his brethren are already engaged in their devotions.

Again, as regards our fellow-worshippers, the practice of coming into the Church after the service has commenced is most unfair and unkind. It disturbs their devotions, as much as

it cheats us of our own. Indeed I do not know that anything can be more injurious to the right discharge of that solemn duty of confession of sins, with which the service almost commences, than to have the voices of the congregation, which should be the only sound heard, mixed with the sound of trampling feet and creaking doors, not to mention the actual disturbance of worshippers on their knees. This is a consideration, which, on the ground of common courtesy and thoughtfulness for the feelings of others, ought to weigh with those who come to Church late.

Moreover, the persons in question themselves suffer in several ways. If in no other way than this, they suffer from the want of time to collect their thoughts, and to put themselves (as it were) consciously in the presence of God, before they enter upon a work which demands all their efforts and attention. But the chief loss which they sustain arises from this, that the service of the Church is not all prayer, nor all praise, nor all confession; it is a combination of various elements, and a person who misses one portion of the service cannot make up for the loss by attention to another portion. Especially it should be noted that after the reading of the introductory sentences, and after the exhortation, comes a portion of the service in which perhaps

more than in any other it is essential that all worshippers should join—I mean, the General Confession of sins. What a necessary part of public worship is confession! How can worship be complete without it? Yet by coming late to Church many persons miss it; and if there be any blessing in the Absolution or Remission of sins pronounced by the Priest as God's appointed minister, they miss that blessing too. In truth the course which has been adopted by the English Church with regard to private confession and private absolution, reserving them as she does for special cases of peculiar need and urgency, ought to make her children all the more earnest in joining in public confession, and claiming the blessing of public absolution, in the manner for which she has made provision in the Book of Common Prayer.

Thus, whether we look at our duty towards God, or our duty towards our neighbour, or our duty towards ourselves, punctual attendance at public worship is absolutely required from all those who are not hindered by some obstacle which they cannot remove. But I will go further than this, and will suggest that those who are able will find great benefit from going to the Church some short time, say ten minutes, before the service is appointed to commence. I know of those who have adopted this practice,

with great benefit to their souls: they are enabled to collect their thoughts, to shake themselves free from worldly cares, to review their lives and conduct, to recall acts which may require special humiliation, to prepare themselves in fact for the worship in which they are about to join. Of course there are many who cannot do this, and I do not say that it is necessary; but I am sure also that there are many who might do it, and who would find benefit.

There is a tendency in England to regard the Church as a place of devotion only during the actual performance of public worship, and to confine private worship to our closets and our homes. Undoubtedly the Church is chiefly the place of worship of the congregation, the place for common prayer and the ministration of God's Word and Sacraments; but we may easily carry this view of the Church too far: in many cases there would be much advantage in having our Churches always open as places for private devotion, and the opportunity of going apart from the multitude and resting awhile would often be a real boon to godly persons, especially amongst the poor[1]. Why should not this be so?

[1] In London and its suburbs the number of Churches open for private devotion is reputed to have increased during the last ten years from 23 to 125.

Without however pursuing this point further just now, it can hardly be doubted by any one who reflects, that the hallowing influence of a Church would be likely to be found a valuable aid in preparing for the solemn service of the congregation; and a few minutes might advantageously be given to reflection and meditation and private devotion before the commencement of Common Prayer.

Might not a devotional book be a useful companion to a worshipper during this quiet time of preparation? Might not holy George Herbert, or Jeremy Taylor, or Bishop Andrewes, (many other names ancient and modern might easily be added to the list), be a suitable companion for the occasion? Or might not this be a convenient opportunity for reading the weekly portion of the *Christian Year?* The principle is recognized by the common practice of using a "Companion to the Altar," or "Eucharistica," at the time of Holy Communion; and it might be usefully extended. But whether this suggestion be good or not, a few minutes of quiet devotional reflection before actually joining in common prayer would, I am convinced, be found by almost all persons a valuable aid in the public worship of God.

CHAPTER V.

POSTURE DURING DIVINE SERVICE.

"We kneeled down on the shore, and prayed."
Acts xxi. 5.

READER, when you enter into your closet and shut to the door, and pray to your Father in secret, do you ever sit down in a chair to perform your devotions? "Certainly not," you reply: "how could you ask such a question? Of course I kneel down while I pray."

Yes, of course you do. Is it not strange that the same *of course* does not seem to apply to a Church, which every one applies to a private chamber?

We are, I trust, better in this respect than we were some years ago; but even now there is much in the greater number of our Churches to shock scrupulous persons. Here is a Church

in which divine service has commenced: the clergyman has just said to the people, "Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many as are here present, to accompany me with a pure heart, and humble voice, unto the throne of the Heavenly Grace." The people in answer to this appeal are professing themselves to be miserable sinners, and are imploring God's mercy: there are many of them, who seem to make their confession as though they felt it: you may see them prostrate in attitude, and repeating the sentences after the Minister with a humble voice as though they meant what they were doing. But some of the worshippers give a widely different impression: if they be indeed miserable sinners, they seem to bear their misery very comfortably, and certainly conceal any pain they may feel admirably well.

Look at that smart lady fanning herself, sitting in her pew with much dignity, as though she felt that it was a proper thing to show oneself in Church, and set a good example: she says that she has erred and strayed from God's ways, and that there is no health in her, but she seems scarcely sensible of the degree of truth which her words contain. Then there is a well-dressed man in the next seat,—what would be called a respectable looking man,—who seems disposed to kneel if it were not for the mischief

that kneeling might do to his clothes[1]. And there is another, and another: what a number of persons you may see amongst the apparently well educated part of the congregation, sitting as much at their ease as if they were in their own houses, some just covering their foreheads with their hands, some making no pretence at all of giving a devotional character to their attitude.

Let no one say that it is unworthy of the Guide to the Parish Church to call attention to such outward matters as posture. Few things are of more importance as aids to devotion; and when a Church is so arranged, as some Churches unfortunately are, as to make it practically impossible for the people to kneel, we may be quite sure that the general standard and tone of devotional worship will be in that Church low and unsatisfactory. But perhaps if we go amongst the poorer part of the congregation, we shall find less to distress us: this vice of easy posture must belong to those

[1] When once thy foot enters the Church, be bare;
God is more there than thou: for thou art there
Only by His permission. Then beware,
And make thyself all reverence and fear.
Kneeling ne'er spoiled silk stockings: quit thy state,
All equal are within the Church's gate.
G. HERBERT.

who are spoilt by easy circumstances. Not at all, the very contrary is the case. Here sitting is almost universal, and the people look as though they were sitting through the prayers as comfortably as they can until the sermon shall begin: in some of our village churches there is scarcely the semblance of kneeling the whole congregation through. This is a sight at once strange and painful: painful, because every thinking person must know that sitting is not the proper attitude for one who comes to worship God, to confess his sins, to receive absolution, to implore grace for the time to come: strange, because not one of those persons, whom we have seen sitting in their places, would think of sitting to pray at home in his own chamber.

It is not worth while to inquire how this most irreverent custom of sitting during public worship began, nor what gave rise to it. I suppose that the fear of spoiling smart clothes has been at the root of the evil, and probably the pew system has fostered it; but I pass on to remark upon the careful manner in which the posture of the worshipper is regulated throughout the service by the ritual of the English Church.

Let it be observed, in the first place, how necessary it is that matters like that of posture,

formal though they may be, should be regulated by authority, and that the worshippers should conform. For forms we must have: a large body, whether of worshippers, or of soldiers, or of children in a school, cannot act together without forms: the thing to be looked to is that the forms be simple and good, and then he who conforms most readily and most heartily is the least of a formalist.

And with regard to the posture of kneeling as that suitable for prayer, we have several Scripture instances to mark it as the right posture. To take the chief instance first, we have the example of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, of whom we read that He "kneeled down and prayed:" so S. Luke tells us in chapter xxii. of his Gospel, and S. Matthew in the parallel passage[1] says that He "fell on His face," and S. Mark[2] that He "fell on the ground." So also S. Stephen "kneeled down" and prayed for his murderers[3]; and S. Peter "kneeled down and prayed" before he raised Dorcas from her death-bed[4]; and S. Paul "kneeled down and prayed" with the elders of the Church of Ephesus[5]; and when the same Apostle took his leave of the Christians at Tyre in order to

[1] S. Matt. xxvi. 39. [2] S. Mark xiv. 35.
[3] Acts vii. 60. [4] Acts ix. 40.
[5] Acts xx. 36.

go up to Jerusalem, the whole company "kneeled down on the shore and prayed[1]." In like manner we find that in olden times King Solomon, when he made that remarkable prayer on occasion of the dedication of the Temple, made the same "upon his knees with his hands spread up to heaven[2]." And lastly, if we go from the Church Militant here on earth to the Church Triumphant in heaven, we read of the elders whom S. John saw in vision performing their worship before the Throne of God, that although they have seats assigned to them in Heaven, yet when they give glory to God they fall prostrate before Him who sits upon the throne, and casting down their crowns before Him in that posture perform their devotions and adore His Majesty[3].

Nor indeed could the Saints either in the Old dispensation or the New have very easily chosen any other than a posture of prostration as that suited for prayer. For it is to be noted that in both the Hebrew and the Greek, the words which we translate by *worship* do necessarily involve the notion of falling down before Him whom we worship. In fact, when we speak of choosing a posture for worship, may it not very possibly or even probably be true, that man had

[1] Acts xxi. 5. [2] 1 Kings viii. 54.
[3] Rev. iv. 10.

no choice in the matter at all? When we see how universal is the instinct of prostration of some kind and to some extent, as a symbol of submission and reverence, may we not reasonably conclude that it is in the truest sense an instinct, a sense implanted by God Himself, a law perhaps impressed upon man at the time of the fall, when he lost his title to assume the erect attitude, which God had assigned to him, in the presence of that God against whom he had sinned? The exception made by the early Christians on the Lord's day, which will be mentioned presently, would seem to favour this view.

Now let us look at the rules for different postures in different portions of the service, which are given in the Book of Common Prayer, and to which Christians of the English Church ought to conform.

When the Minister commences Morning or Evening Prayer by reading one or more of the sentences appointed for the opening of public worship, the congregation stand; and in that attitude they listen while the Minister further addresses them upon the duty of confessing their sins to Almighty God. Standing would seem to be the attitude of respectful attention: the Minister comes as an ambassador from Christ, and to shew that his message is welcome, and that it will be attended to, the people rise up to meet him.

The address concluded, there is a change of posture. The Minister finishes his exhortation by praying and beseeching the people, with a pure heart and humble voice, to join him in a confession of sins before the throne of the heavenly grace. Confession should be made in the humblest of postures, and therefore it is ordered to be made by the whole congregation, "all kneeling." While on their knees the congregation repeat the General Confession after the Minister, sentence by sentence, and then in the same posture receive from him Absolution in God's Name, which he delivers standing, that being the posture of authority, and because when pronouncing Absolution he no longer speaks with the people to God, but for God to the people. The Lord's Prayer is then recited by all kneeling; and this posture is preserved until, on the ascription of Glory to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the whole congregation rise, the erect posture being the fitting one for praise, as that of prostration is for confession and prayer.

For the same reason the standing posture is preserved during the opening hymn, *Venite Exultemus*, and throughout the Psalms; and generally during all singing and reciting of Psalms and Hymns, the congregation stand.

During the reading of the Lessons the sitting

posture is permitted. This is not merely a condescension to human infirmity, because the worshippers might be wearied with incessant kneeling and standing, but also it is the posture in which persons can listen with the greatest attention for a considerable period. On this account the same posture is permitted during sermons, and indeed this is the rule whenever the Minister is reading or speaking to the people, with few exceptions: thus, during the rehearsal of the Commandments, in the commencement of the Communion Service, the people kneel; the reason apparently being, that the people are engaged in prayer that they may be able to keep these commandments: and again, in the reading of the Gospel, according to a very ancient custom, the people stand, in acknowledgment of the praise due to God the Father for the Gospel of Jesus Christ His Son[1].

Thus during the whole of divine service the three positions of standing, sitting, and kneeling, are adopted for different portions according to these plain rules:—

For praise and singing, stand; and in addition, at the opening of Morning and Evening

[1] The custom of rising up at the reading of the Gospel is certainly as old as Chrysostom, for he speaks of it in one of his homilies on S. Matthew: "If the letters of a king are read in the theatre with great silence; much more ought we to compose ourselves,

Prayer, and during the reading of the Gospel in the Communion Service.

For listening to lessons and sermons, sit.

For confession and prayer, kneel[1].

Do not these rules commend themselves to our judgment as being simple and good? suited to God's greatness and our own infirmity? And who shall say that the person who observes them is a formalist? Should we not rather commend him as one who is willing to put his own opinion out of sight and to follow in the way pointed out for him, as one who believes that in all matters in which God has not given express command, a member of a Christian society best consults the edification of himself and his fellows by adopting the rules of behaviour which the society has itself approved[2]?

and stand up with attentive ears, when the letters, not of an earthly king, but of the Lord of Angels, are read to us." Bingham's *Antiquities*, Bk. XIV. Chap. III. § 10.

[1] Kneeling is also the posture appointed for the reception of the sacramental elements; "which order is well meant, for a signification of our humble and grateful acknowledgment of the benefits of Christ therein given to all worthy receivers, and for the avoiding of such profanation and disorder in the Holy Communion as might otherwise ensue." See the note at the end of the Communion Office, commonly called the *Black Rubric*.

[2] I have referred in what I have said concerning posture only to what is definitely ordered, or uni-

I have spoken of sitting in God's house as being a condescension to human infirmity. So in the presence of the Queen the recognized posture is that of standing, although in case of age and infirmity a subject is sometimes requested to sit: and it is hardly necessary to say that the rules of the Church Service are insisted upon with this understanding, that compliance with them is not rendered inconvenient by the state of the bodily health of the worshipper,—a matter this in which each person must judge, as between God and his conscience, what is right and fitting. But before leaving the subject I will notice, as confirming the view that standing and kneeling are the recognized postures and sitting only a permissive regulation, this curious fact, that there is throughout the rubrics no positive direction to sit. Look for instance at the rubric which orders the reading of the Lessons. It runs thus: "Then shall be read distinctly with an audible voice the First Lesson,...he that readeth so standing and

versally admitted; there are minor points of attitude which are not ordered in the rubrics and are not universally adopted, but which yet are common, harmless, and perhaps edifying. Such is the turning towards the east in reciting the Creeds. The best rule with regard to such matters is to follow the practice of the particular church in which we may be called upon to worship.

turning himself, as he may best be heard of all such as are present. And after that, shall be said or sung, in English, the hymn called *Te Deum Laudamus*, daily throughout the year." Here is no direction concerning posture; but we are in the habit of sitting during the lesson, and then rising for the *Te Deum Laudamus*,—a habit this, however, which is permitted, but not enjoined. So, again, the rubric which directs the Sermon, leaves the people standing after the rehearsal of the Nicene Creed, and simply orders, "Then shall follow the Sermon, &c.," without particularizing a change of posture; it is, no doubt, very desirable that during the Sermon, which may possibly last half-an-hour or more, the congregation should sit; it is the posture most fitted for edification; almost the only possible one; still no mention of it is made, and it must therefore even in this case be regarded as permitted and not enjoined. No one would wish to deprive the congregation of the opportunities of sitting, which custom has granted, during the reading of the Lessons and of the Epistle, and during the preaching of the Sermon; but it is well worthy of the consideration of sitting worshippers—those who make sitting not the exception but the rule, not a condescension to infirmity but the prevailing posture in God's house,—that this their favourite habit of

sitting during divine service is nowhere expressly recognized by the rules for public worship given in the Church's own book.

The fact is that posture during divine service is just one of those things which each branch of Christ's Holy Catholic Church has a right to regulate for itself; and when any particular Church has made its own rules according to the best judgment it is capable of exercising, then each member of that Church should conform, and should not permit either indolence or prejudice to interfere with conformity[1]. It may however be remarked, that the present regulations of the Church of England are not altogether the same as in the early Churches. "Of posture," says Bingham, "we find four kinds generally practised and allowed, namely, standing, kneeling, bowing, and prostration. For sitting, which some add as a fifth sort, was never allowed by the ancients as an ordinary posture of devotion. Standing was the general observation of the whole Church on the Lord's Day, and the fifty days between Easter and Pentecost,

[1] "It is not necessary that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all places one, and utterly like; for at all times they have been divers, and may be changed according to the diversities of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word." *Article XXXIV.*

in memory of our Saviour's resurrection. This custom may be traced as high as Irenaeus, who derives it from Apostolical authority[1]." And if the reader likes to consult the place referred to at the foot of the page, he may find much more information on the same point; but the general result is, that in early times standing during divine service seems to have been the general rule on the Lord's Day, and kneeling on the other days of the week.

Before leaving this subject I will quote Hooker's remarks upon the changes of attitude and gesture practised in the English Church.

"When we make profession of our faith we stand; when we acknowledge our sins, or seek unto God for favour, we fall down: because the gesture of constancy becometh us best in the one, in the other the behaviour of humility. Some parts of our liturgy consist in the reading of the Word of God, and the proclaiming of His Law, that the people may thereby learn what their duties are towards Him; some consist in words of praise and thanksgiving, whereby we acknowledge unto God what His blessings are towards us; some are such as albeit they serve to singular good purpose even when there is no Communion administered, nevertheless, being

[1] Bingham's *Antiquities*, Bk. XIII. Chap. VIII. § 3.

devised at the first for that purpose, are at the Table of the Lord for that cause also commonly read; some are uttered as from the people, some as with them unto God, some as from God unto them, all as before His sight whom we fear, and whose presence to offend with any the least unseemliness we would be surely as loth as they who most reprehend or deride that we do.

"Now because the Gospels which are weekly read do all historically declare some thing which our Lord Jesus Christ Himself either spake, did, or suffered in His own person, it hath been the custom of Christian men then especially, in token of the greater reverence, to stand, to utter certain words of acclamation, and at the Name of Jesus to bow; which harmless ceremonies as there is no man constrained to use, so we know no reason wherefore any man should yet imagine it an insufferable evil. It sheweth a reverent regard to the Son of God above other messengers, although speaking as from God also. And against Infidels, Jews, Arians, who derogate from the honour of Jesus Christ, such ceremonies are most profitable. As to any erroneous estimation, advancing the Son above the Father and the Holy Ghost, seeing that the truth of His equality with them is a mystery so hard for the wits of mortal man to rise unto, of

all heresies that which may give Him superiority above them is least to be feared[1]."

I conclude this chapter with the following quotation from the 18th Canon:

"In the time of Divine Service, and of every part thereof, all due reverence is to be used; for it is according to the Apostle's rule, Let all things be done decently, and according to order....All manner of persons...shall reverently kneel upon their knees, when the General Confession, Litany, and other prayers are read; and shall stand up at the saying of the Belief, according to the rules in that behalf prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer. And likewise when in time of Divine Service the Lord Jesus shall be mentioned, due and lowly reverence shall be done by all persons present, as it hath been accustomed; testifying, by these outward ceremonies and gestures, their inward humility, Christian resolution, and due acknowledgment that the Lord Jesus Christ, the true eternal Son of God, is the only Saviour of the world, in whom alone all the mercies, graces, and promises of God to mankind, for this life, and the life to come, are fully and wholly comprised."

[1] *Eccles. Polity*, Bk. v. Chap. xxx. The objection obviated in the concluding sentence was one of the Puritan objections of Hooker's time, and perhaps not likely to be pressed in our own.

CHAPTER VI.

WANDERING EYES AND WANDERING THOUGHTS.

"If thine eye offend thee....."
S. Matthew xviii. 9.

"LET the breast," says S. Cyprian, "be shut against the adversary and opened to God alone, not suffering the Enemy of God to approach it in the time of prayer. For he oftentimes creeps nigh and enters in, and by subtle artifice calls away our prayers from God, so that we have one thing in our heart, and another in our voice, whereas it is not the sound of the voice, but the mind and thoughts, that ought in sincerity of purpose to be addressing the Lord. What slothfulness it is, to be carried away by foolish and profane thoughts when you are presenting your petitions to the Lord, as if there was anything which you ought to consider rather than this, that you are speaking to God! How can

you expect God to attend to you, when you do not attend to yourself. Shall God remember you in your supplications, when you do not remember yourself[1]?".

I do not know of anything more commonly fatal to devotion in the Church than the wandering of the eye and the consequent wandering of the thoughts. This remark applies chiefly to those portions of the service which are performed standing: the temptation is greater to some than to others, and it is a temptation the strength of which is much increased by giving way to it. A person who goes to Church for the express purpose of seeing and being seen, will evidently not be disposed to take pains to guard against the evil: the use of the eye in spying out all that is to be spied out, is the very thing which attracts him or her to Church; but this is a vile use to make of God's house, and while I am persuaded that some go to Church upon this principle, I am equally persuaded that none who do so will read this book or any like it: therefore I shall assume that my reader, if a victim to the temptation of the wandering eye, is an unwilling victim and ashamed of his weakness.

What is the remedy? The eye upon the

[1] Treatise on the *Lord's Prayer*.

book. Never mind what is the colour of Mrs A.'s new bonnet, or why Mr B. who is so regular in general is not at Church to-day; in fact, do not permit any single thought to run through your mind except thoughts of God. But how can you help it? Again I say, the eye on the book. You have the whole service in the Book of Common Prayer and the Bible; follow them, keep your eye upon them, and then it cannot be playing truant elsewhere.

But besides the wandering eye and the wandering thought connected with it, there is much wandering of thought in Church, quite as mischievous, and not so easily guarded against. Satan always makes his strongest attacks on this side: if he can contrive to cause the mind to wander from the subject before it, so that the professed worshipper might, for anything he understands of the service, as well be out of the Church as in it, then he has done his work well. This wandering is a great difficulty in the way of almost all of us: it does not belong to public worship only, it belongs to all acts of devotion; but the subject of this book requires that it should be dealt with here only so far as public worship is concerned. It is, however, a deep-lying difficulty, one which cannot be removed once and for ever, one which will perpetually recur, and, like a weed which has been

cut down, but which has left its roots running deep into the soil, will soon get head again if not continually watched and kept under. What then is to be done?

In general it may be said that the danger of wandering thoughts will become less as the dignity of the worship of God is more deeply felt. A perpetual effort to realize the presence of God, or (to speak more correctly) to realize the truth that we are present to Him, that all our thoughts lie open before Him with whom we have to do, will serve as an antidote to the efforts of Satan to fill our minds with vain thoughts. Again, in this, as in all spiritual combats, a sense of our own weakness and proneness to fall, and a corresponding sense of the need of the Holy Spirit's aid, is necessary to give us any reasonable hope of keeping our minds free from evil thoughts: he who thinks he stands must take heed lest he fall: he who thinks he can serve God in his own strength will perhaps be taught by painful spiritual falls that he must have a strength not his own. Hence also we shall hardly serve God aright unless we feel the great difficulty of the work, and the possibility, not to say probability, that Satan may cheat us of our blessing.

Some may think that this kind of language is mistaken. They may say that God's children

serve Him from the heart, willingly, lovingly, and that if a man be truly converted to God, he will need nothing to guard him from wandering thoughts, except the constraining love of Christ. Such a view, however, would drive many humble Christians to despair: feeling their own infirmity, they would conclude that if a real conversion of heart to God did necessarily imply this complete harmony of the soul with God's service, then they can lay no claim to such conversion. And indeed I believe that although there may be seasons in which the Christian soul runs so willingly in the course of God's commandments that it needs no guiding or help or check, yet these seasons are the exception and not the rule of the life of the Christian soul. Nine persons out of ten amongst ordinary Christians are of necessity immersed deeply in worldly business, family cares, hard labour for daily bread, and the like: the necessary devotion of time and energy to worldly work—a devotion, be it observed, entirely in accordance with God's good Providence—does unquestionably render the minds of such persons liable to be infected with unwelcome thoughts, when they should be wholly absorbed in devotion: and yet these are the persons with whom we have chiefly to do. I do not wish to blame them, but to help them. I

do not wish to say, "My good friends, you are much taken up with worldly cares and worldly business, and as long as this is so you cannot be spiritually minded: when you can give up the world, then you may expect to be converted to God, and then His service will be a delight to you:" to speak thus would be heartless and cruel: I would rather say, "My brethren, God has placed you where you are, and He knows your difficulties; and what He expects from you is not perfection, but zeal in struggling against your difficulties: do not think it impossible to serve God while worldly occupations engage you, but rather sanctify your occupations by a vigourous effort to serve God."

I suspect that if we had the power of examining and coming at the truth, we should find that the state of entire conversion of heart in which the mind of the Christian requires no rules and restraints, but runs in the way of God without distraction, is for the most part rather a fiction than a sober reality. The experience of holy men, I believe, supports this view; and though it be granted that by certain very pure and holy servants of God a marvellous degree of freedom from the ordinary weaknesses of human nature has sometimes been attained, still this admission by no means affects the point in hand: partly, because I do not suppose

my readers to be extraordinary but ordinary every-day Christians; and partly, because it does not appear that those who have attained to the greatest fervour and constancy of devotion have done so in any other way, than by watching and diligence and taking Heaven (as it were) by force. Let the recorded lives of saints, whether in ancient mediæval or modern times, be the witness to the truth of this last remark.

I hold then that the power of fixing the attention during divine service, and driving away wandering thoughts in the manner which such attention implies, is a power to be gained by every earnest Christian and to be strengthened by practice and effort. Giving full weight to the fundamental principles of reliance upon the help of God's Holy Spirit, self-abasement, frequent applications for aid at the Throne of Grace,—principles having their whole life centred in the earnest desire to serve God and walk with Him,—I would add one or two plain practical hints, which may be found useful by those who labour under the difficulties which we have been engaged in discussing.

(1) The *use of a book*, so as to follow the words of the prayers, will be found highly advantageous. Persons sometimes depend upon their knowledge of the prayers to follow them

without book, and some may be able to do so: but the greater number of worshippers will probably find much assistance from a book, however thoroughly they may remember the words of the prayers. Indeed this steadying of the attention by means of a book is one great argument for the advantage of set forms of prayer over extemporaneous, or at all events unwritten or rather unprinted effusions. For the same reason it is well to find the lessons in a Bible, and to follow the Minister while reading them.

(2) The plan, which has already been suggested, of repairing to Church some little time before the commencement of divine service, will be found to give great aid in fixing the attention throughout. The mind will be calmed; worldly cares will be replaced by thoughts proper for the House of God; time will have been given to reflect upon the solemnity of the service, and to arm against the weapons of the enemy with the defensive armour of prayer.

(3) If we find ourselves faulty in the particular now under consideration, it will be well to keep the failing much before our minds, to think upon it frequently, to make it matter for repentance and sorrow; for thus by grieving over the past, we shall be more likely to do

better for the time to come, and the remembrance of our fault will produce sorrow, and sorrow will beget repentance, and repentance will lead to amendment.

(4) A careful compliance with the rules and customs of the Church will be found to be an aid to fixing the attention. Of course this is not the only advantage; but certainly the frequent change of posture, and the variety of service, consisting as it does now of an address from the Minister, now of Psalms recited or chanted, now of Lessons, now of Creeds, now of Litanies, now of Collects,—this character of the service is probably intended, and certainly is found in fact, to possess a great tendency to keep the mind fresh and the attention alive.

Hints of this kind are not to be despised. Useless as external rules are when there is no preparation of the heart, nothing can be more useful when that preparation has by God's grace been made. Jacob worshipped God "leaning on the top of his staff[1]": it was but an earthly and frail support, and yet it answered the purpose of enabling a man of God to overcome his infirmities and look up to Heaven. There may be moments in the life of a Christian,

[1] Heb. xi. 21.

when the willingness of the spirit altogether eclipses the weakness of the flesh; but it must be remembered that the public worship of Almighty God has to be performed, not at times chosen by the worshipper himself, but at stated periods. When the Church bells ring, the spirit of the worshipper is expected to respond; and sometimes it will require an effort even with the best of Christians to banish all worldly thoughts; but the effort is one well worth making, and those who value the blessing of public worship most will make it the most vigourously.

And it is well to remember that the author of all impediments, which lie between us and God, is no other than our great spiritual enemy, and that the greater the privilege of worshipping God in church, the greater will be the efforts of the Devil to annul the privilege. But the Devil may be resisted, and so made to flee: and as a sling and a stone in the hand of David slew the giant, so very simple rules may with God's help be useful for the defence of a Christian in his spiritual warfare.

Bishop Beveridge gives the following five rules concerning the Church Service: they may be usefully inserted here, both for their own sake, and also as enforcing what has already been advanced in this book.

"First. Come not to our public prayers only out of custom or for fashion's sake, as the manner of some is, but out of a sincere obedience to God's commands, and with a sure trust and confidence in His promises for His blessing upon what you do. For which end it will be very good, as you go to Church, to bethink yourselves whither you are going, and what you are to do there, that so laying aside all other business, you may put yourselves into a right temper for so great a work.

"Secondly. Frequent our public prayers as often as you conveniently can. The oftener you are at them, the better you will like them, and the more edified you will be by them; and, therefore, do not satisfy yourselves with hearing them once a-week: in [many places] you may enjoy the benefit of them publicly every day, and so keep your hearts continually in a holy and heavenly frame, and always live as becometh Christians: and if you neglect such opportunities as are now put into your hands, you will one day wish you had not; but then wishing will do no good.

"Thirdly. If possible, come always at the beginning of Divine Service; otherwise you will certainly miss of something that would have been edifying to you, and perhaps of that which at that time might have done you more

good than all the rest. Neither will you lose the benefit only of a part of it, but in some measure of the whole too; all the parts of it being linked together in so excellent a manner and method, that they influence and assist each other: so that nothing can be omitted either by Minister or People, but the whole will suffer by it, and lose something of that virtue and efficacy, which otherwise you will find in it.

"Fourthly. All the while that you are in God's house carry yourself as in His special presence, suitably to the work that you are about; standing while ye praise God, and kneeling when ye pray unto Him, as our Church hath directed you: for though these may seem little things in themselves, yet they are of great consequence, both to our worshipping God aright, and to our being edified by what we do.

"Lastly. Take special care all along to keep your mind intent upon the matter in hand: when you confess your sins to God, do it with a hearty and sincere repentance for all the errors of your life past; when the Absolution is pronounced, receive it with a firm and steadfast faith in Christ our Saviour; when you repeat or sing the Hymns and Psalms, raise up your spirits as high as you can, to join with those above, in praising and magnifying the

eternal God; when the Word of God is read, hearken diligently unto it, and consider seriously what He that made you saith to you, and requireth of you, and resolve, by His blessing, to believe and live accordingly: and all the while that you are upon your knees, putting up your petitions to the Most High God, let your whole souls be employed in it, earnestly desiring the good things you pray for at His gracious hands, and humbly confiding in His faithful promises for the granting of them. By this means you will perform reasonable service unto God; and, by consequence, that which will be very acceptable unto Him, and as profitable and edifying to yourselves: whereas they that do not observe this rule, cannot be properly said to pray, or serve God at all. And therefore it is no wonder that they come to Church and hear the Common Prayer read, and yet are no way edified by it. Indeed it is impossible that they should: forasmuch as all the benefit and edification that we can possibly receive from any of our devotions depends very much upon the due intention of our minds in the performance of them; to which both a form of prayer in general, and ours in particular, is a very great help.

"Do but observe these plain and necessary rules in using the Common Prayer, (without

which you cannot be truly said to use, but rather to abuse it,) and you will soon find it to be true, that all things in it are done to edifying[1]."

[1] Sermon by Bishop Beveridge on "The excellency and usefulness of the Common Prayer."

CHAPTER VII.

THE RESPONSES.

"Let all the people say, Amen."
Psalm cvi. 46.

I REMEMBER once examining some Sunday School children, and endeavouring to lead them to see that the Absolution ought not to be repeated by the people, but said "by the Priest alone." So I asked the question, By whom ought the Absolution to be said? and received the answer, "By the Minister;" but when I asked the further question, By whom ought the *Amen* at the conclusion to be said? I received the answer, "By the Clerk." The child who gave me the answer unconsciously uttered a very severe satire upon the manner in which the service is, or used to be, frequently performed. Judging of what ought to be from what is, the

child naturally came to the conclusion that the *Amen* rightfully belonged to the clerk, because he always had it to himself. To "say Amen, like a clerk" used to be an almost proverbial expression; and nine people out of ten used to think, not long ago, that it was chiefly for this purpose that clerks existed.

Nothing of course could be more absurd: if the saying of *Amen* express the assent to and participation in the prayers by those who are present and who are supposed to be assembled for the very purpose of common prayer, what profit can there be in the saying of *Amen* by a Clerk? If it is to be said by deputy, why not allow the Clergyman to read the Amen as well as the prayer, and so make the process more simple? The fact seems to be that the office of clerk in a Parish Church is one fitted chiefly to a rude condition of society: the intention is that the congregation should have a leader, and probably in an ignorant body of worshippers this may be the only practicable means of conducting the service; but in a congregation of persons well or moderately educated, nine-tenths of whom probably are more fit to lead their brethren than the person appointed for that purpose, the office appears to be unnecessary and likely to be mischievous.

In most parishes however the office of the

clerk as the leader of the people in their responses has quite passed away. In some no substitute has been provided, and the congregation have been left to make the responses without looking to any one for an example except themselves. And certainly a plain unmusical service, in which the congregation perform the part assigned to them in a quiet dignified manner, may be a very noble offering in God's Temple. But this kind of service is becoming less common day by day: the Parish Choir, which corresponds to the *Clerks* of which we find notice in the Book of Common Prayer, is becoming a recognized institution; and now even in plain village Churches we find not only the Canticles chanted by a Choir, but also the Amens and Versicles rendered in like manner, and sometimes the Psalms. The propriety or advantage of forming a Choir in a Parish is not a subject with which I am concerned just now; but it is very much to my purpose to observe, that it is possible that the same kind of mischief may arise from the employment of a Choir, which is in fact a disciplined body of Clerks, as from that of the old fashioned single Clerk, who has so nearly passed away. It is common to speak of a *hearty service;* and when there is a numerous Choir, and the members of it sing the responses and versicles and Amens with great spirit, it is not unusual to

assume that the service may be rightly described as hearty. But it must be borne in mind that it is quite possible, that the full sound of the voices of the Choir may simply hide the muttering or silence of the congregation: it is as bad to leave the work of responding to twenty Clerks as it is to leave it to one, and it is not at all certain that a choral service is hearty because the whole Church is filled with sound, and because every *Amen* comes forth with "a joyful noise": the people's hearts may be far away, and the service, though brilliant in human ears, may be displeasing to Him "from whom no secrets are hid."

As I have thus pointed out the danger of leaving too much to the Choir, I ought to add that there are nevertheless parts of the service which may be rightly left to be sung by those who have skill and discipline to sing. The rubric after the third Collect in the Morning and Evening service runs thus: "In Choirs and places where they sing, here followeth the Anthem." This order recognizes the introduction of an anthem or elaborate piece of sacred part music—for this may be taken as a rough definition of an Anthem—in Churches in which there is a trained body of singers. Now when an Anthem is sung, it is quite clear that it is not intended that all should join; there may be a few in a congregation, who, if they have in their

hands a copy of the music, will be able to take part in a chorus, and be (as it were) a volunteer addition to the trained Choir; but it does not follow that the Anthem should be unedifying, and the hearing of it merely pleasurable, because it is sung by a Choir and listened to by the Congregation. On the other hand, it may be most profitable to the worshippers; for the words of the Anthem are almost always Scripture words, and generally taken from the most striking passages of Holy Scripture; in fact, they would scarcely be chosen if there was not something striking in their language; and the musical declamation of words of Scripture by a body of singers may be regarded as a highly dignified and impressive mode of delivering them to the people. The Anthem is a Lesson. The clergyman reads a lesson, and the people listen and are edified; the Choir sing an anthem, and the people listen and equally ought to be edified. It is a miserably low notion of Anthems that they are musical entertainments, to be heard as a voluntary on the organ may be heard: they are lessons of Scripture, and sometimes make a deeper impression than those chapters, which are simply read as the first and second lessons of the Service.

For music lends itself in a wonderful way to solemn words; and when once the words of

Scripture have been *set* by a great Master, the notes to which the words have been wedded seem to bring them home to the mind and feelings of a devout listener in a degree which is impossible without musical help. It would be easy to give examples of this; but I must not run too far away from the point which is immediately before us, which is the making of the responses. The congregation must not leave this to the Choir: they may listen to an Anthem, many of them may be unable even to chant the Psalms, but they must not let the Choir take from them all their part in the service; they must not let the skill of the choir cover their negligence; they must not forget that it is as bad to say *Amen* by deputy when the Church possesses a trained choir, as it is when the only deputy is an unmusical parish clerk. The prayer, "O Lord, open Thou our lips," and the rejoinder, "And our mouth shall shew forth Thy praise," are applicable to the whole congregation, and not merely to Priest and Choir.

Sometimes perhaps silence arises not from carelessness, but from shyness; some people have a great dislike to hearing their own voice. This shyness should be overcome, if possible; it is apt to be infectious; and if a few of the more influential members of a congregation allow themselves to be silent, it is almost certain

that others will follow their example, and the result cannot fail to be deplorable.

Join in the responses then audibly to the best of your ability, clerk or no clerk, choir or no choir[1].

[1] What has been said about the clerk and his duties may be usefully illustrated by comparing a rubric in the *Accession Service* with the corresponding rubric in the service of Morning Prayer. In the former we find the following: "*Instead of* VENITE EXULTEMUS *the Hymn following shall be said or sung; one Verse by the Priest, and another by the Clerk and People;*" whereas the corresponding rubric in the ordinary Morning Service runs thus: "*Then shall be said or sung this Psalm following.*" The mention of the Clerk (not Clerks) in the Accession Service is to be noted; and so is the recognition of the practice, which for a long time has been common and continues so still, of the Priest repeating one verse and the Clerk and people another. The Accession Service in its present form dates from the beginning of the last century: in the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer there is, so far as I know, no reference to this practice.

CHAPTER VIII.

PREVIOUS STUDY OF THE SUNDAY SERVICES.

"My study shall be in Thy Statutes."
Psalm cxix. 48.

GREAT advantage will arise to the worshipper in Church on the Sunday, the only day upon which a large majority of English people are able to go to Church, if he have prepared himself by a study of the services appropriate to the day. Some portions of the service are fixed, that is to say, are the same from one Sunday to another; but others are changeable, and it will be well to search out and examine these beforehand, and so to be prepared to use them to the best advantage. The changeable portions are the Psalms, the Lessons, and the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel. These it will be desirable to have studied beforehand; a person who does so will find, that when he listens in Church to

portions of Scripture to which he has previously directed his attention at home, he will understand them far better than he would if they came upon him unexpectedly. But, besides this, he will frequently find that the different portions of Scripture and the Collect appointed for a particular day explain and throw light upon each other: sometimes they are almost evidently chosen with especial reference to this mutual elucidation, sometimes it may be the result of accident; but anyhow it will form a valuable study for the worshipper in Church, to take the various portions of Holy Scripture which are thus brought together into the service of one day, and to examine their mutual bearing. Holy Scripture will thus be seen to be an admirable interpreter of itself; it will be a healthy exercise to strive to understand Scripture in this way; and when the services have been previously studied, the Scriptures of the day will be listened to with a degree of insight and of satisfaction, which cannot otherwise be easily obtained.

Sometimes, moreover, the Scriptures of the day may contain some difficulty which cannot be got over in merely listening to them once read; and in such cases it will be an advantage to have quietly scanned the difficulty beforehand, and taken the dimensions of it, and endeavoured to surmount it. What a pleasure too may

sometimes be enjoyed, when after toiling over some hard passage in the services, and having contended with it almost in vain, the sermon on the Sunday is made to deal with that very difficulty, and by the light so thrown upon it the perplexing passage starts into clear day! And how much more will such an elucidation be valued by one who has in a manner earned it by previous care and study, than by one who never thought of the difficulty, or knew of its existence, until the sermon pointed it out!

I have already spoken of Sunday as the only day upon which a large majority of English people are able to go to Church, and therefore have referred especially to the Sunday services. This book is in fact intended chiefly for those whose leisure is small, and who cannot hope to join in the services of the Church much more frequently than on every Lord's day. Even if persons be so circumstanced that they are within reach of an open Church, and can manage to attend, it does not follow that they will be able to find time to make a daily preparation for the services, such as that which I have been recommending. Anyhow the Sunday service, with its proper first lessons and its Epistle and Gospel, requires a more than ordinary amount of attention; and the absence or great diminution of worldly occupations upon

the Lord's day, will enable the greater number of Churchgoers to give some attention to the study of these parts of the service on that day, if they will.

Some years ago there was scarcely a Church to be found in which the worshipper at the morning service on Sunday would not hear the two appointed lessons, and also the Epistle and Gospel in the Communion Service. This is still the case very generally; but the uniformity is not quite so complete as it was, and in some Churches the Holy Communion is administered at one time, and Morning Prayer said at another. The principle, however, of what has been said holds good, and the worshipper in each Church knows its customs and can prepare himself accordingly.

A relaxation of absolute uniformity has also taken place in our Churches of late years, by the introduction of a new Table of Lessons in which the portions of Scripture for each service are not rigidly fixed. There is no change in this respect with regard to the Morning Service; but for Evensong there are two proper first lessons appointed for each Sunday, either of which may be used. Probably in most Churches the Clergyman will have some rule known to his people, according to which he determines which lesson he will read.

It is well that this should be so. There is also an uncertainty concerning the second lesson in Churches which have two evening services, as will be seen from the following direction in the Book of Common Prayer: "If Evening Prayer is said at two different times in the same place of worship on any Sunday (except a Sunday for which alternative Second Lessons are specially appointed in the Tables) the Second Lesson at the second time may, at the discretion of the Minister, be any chapter from the four Gospels, or any Lesson appointed in the Table of Lessons from the four Gospels." Of course the recommendation concerning the previous study of the Lessons can be carried out only when it is exactly known beforehand from the Table what Lessons will be read.

It may be worth while to suggest whether the order for reading Holy Scripture, given in the Table of Lessons, especially as regards the New Testament, would not be a good order for daily private reading. Such an order must secure a complete and symmetrical study of God's Word, and the Sunday second lessons would fall into the routine of Scripture reading whether in the closet or in the Church.

I may observe, before leaving this subject, that the mutual relation of the Collect, Epistle,

and Gospel is frequently so striking that it has led some writers to suppose that the name *Collect* is intended to signify that the prayer so called is *collected* out of the Epistle and Gospel[1]. I do not at all believe that such is the origin of the word: nevertheless the fact of such a derivation having been proposed, and being supported by good authority, is worth noting, as pointing out a relation which very often exists, and as suggesting the advantage which may accrue from studying the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel together[2].

[1] Wheatley, *On the Book of Common Prayer*, Chap. III. § xix. See also Freeman's *Principles of Divine Service*, Part I. Chap. I. § vii., where, after discussing other derivations of the word, he adds, "But it may still be questioned whether the true reason of the name be not its *gathering out of* the Eucharistic Scriptures of the day the topics of prayer or blessing; a derivation which has always been a favourite one with ritualists, and has at least the recommendation that it renders very accurately one great characteristic of the Collect." On the other hand Bishop Cosin writes, "*Collects*, so called because they *collect* into one all the petitions of the people, or because they are offered when the people have all been collected together." *Notes on the Book of Common Prayer*, p. 247. Nevertheless Cosin admits that other writers give other derivations, quoting especially Alcuin, the disciple of Bede and preceptor of Charlemagne.

[2] I may add that the origin of the Collects themselves, which is frequently very interesting, may be easily studied by help of the *Prayer-Book Interleaved.*

CHAPTER IX.

CHURCH MUSIC.

"I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song."
Rev. xiv. 2, 3.

SOMETHING has already been said incidentally concerning the Parish Choir, when we were considering the responses of the congregation in the service of the Church; but it will be well to discuss more fully the question of Church Music and also the position and duties of the Parish Choir.

There may be difference of opinion as to the extent, to which it may be desirable to introduce music into Divine Service. The Church of England, with that caution and moderation which characteristically belong to her, leaves the matter in a great degree discretional, and to be decided upon by the particular circumstances of different congregations. Thus several portions of the service are appointed either to

be *said* or *sung:* the Psalms of David are pointed for singing[1], and therefore the singing of them is recognized, but it is not expressly ordered: and a place is marked out, namely after the third Collect, for an Anthem, in those places in which an Anthem can be advantageously introduced. It is remarkable that metrical hymns, which are so striking a feature in the ordinary service of the Parish Church, are nowhere expressly ordered or even mentioned.

Unquestionably the service of the English Church then only appears in its full grandeur, when it is choral to the full extent allowed by the Book of Common Prayer; but as true taste is shown not so much in grandeur as in consistency, and as the fittings of a palace or a mansion may be quite unseemly in a cottage, so the proprieties of public worship demand, not a uniformity of practice between the Cathedral and the Village Church, but a mode of conducting the service in each case most adapted to its peculiar circumstances. At the same time it is to be remembered that much may be done towards raising and improving musical taste; and it is quite wonderful to what an extent, by

[1] The title-page of the Book of Common Prayer states that the book contains "The Psalter, or Psalms of David, *pointed as they are to be sung or said in Churches.*"

proper training, musical power has been evoked in some of our country villages. And though it is certainly true that the feeling for music varies much even in different parts of England, so that in some parts music grows wild, and in others it is the merest exotic, still in a considerable population chosen from any part of the country, it is probable that a fair amount of musical power will always be found.

The question of the abstract propriety of a musical service is one difficult to argue, because it is almost prejudicated in each person's mind by his own musical or unmusical feelings. To one who has a thoroughly musical soul, it appears self-evident that the highest form of divine worship is the musical; and he may fairly quote, in favour of his view, the representation of the service in heaven, witnessed by S. John in his vision, as being a musical service. On the other hand, there are those whose minds have no musical sympathies, and to them a choral service may appear formal and unedifying: though even here it might be possible to quote cases, in which the choral service has been at one period displeasing, and has after a time been recognized as the most delightful form of public worship: there is much in habit and education, with regard to this as with regard to most other things. Probably we shall be kept free from

practical errors, if we bear in mind, that the service was made for man, and not man for the service: and that however obvious one particular view of a subject may seem to some, still if they be a decided minority in any congregation of Christian people, they ought to make their own wishes to bend to those of their brethren.

In some parishes, in which a difference of feeling exists with regard to musical services, a compromise is effected by arranging that some of the services shall be more musical than others. There may be, for example, a choral service in the evening and a plainer one in the morning. It is most desirable that all worshippers should find the service such as they can join in without vexation, and that there should be no division amongst brethren as to the manner in which divine service should be conducted.

In almost all Churches, except the Cathedrals, and even sometimes in them, it is the custom to introduce metrical Psalms and Hymns, though (as already mentioned) without express authority from the Book of Common Prayer. An immense improvement has taken place with respect to this part of the service of late years. Not long ago it might be truly said, that many of the Psalms and Hymns in common use succeeded in combining to a very painful extent

bad doctrine, bad taste, and bad poetry; while many of the tunes were completely undevotional and sadly unfit for a Church. I fear it cannot be asserted even now that all the Hymns in use are such as they should be; still there has been a marked improvement, and the music used is for the most part not only unobjectionable, but to a great extent of a high order of merit. Much has been done also to improve the Hymn singing in our Churches by the publication of books, which give words and music together, so that persons having even a slight knowledge of musical notation can join without difficulty in the hymns used in the Parish Church.

The quality of the hymns and the music to which they are set is not however a matter which it lies in my way just now to discuss: the question rather is, what may the people do to render the singing of Psalms and Hymns as worthy of public worship as possible? The obvious answer is, Let all join in the singing who can. But how join? They may do this either skilfully or unskilfully: and certainly an unskilful performance from the heart of a congregation is better than a skilful performance which comes only from the lips: but why not skilful and from the heart too? When several hundreds of voices are to be raised together, it is quite obvious that they will need marshalling and drilling in order

even to keep them in their places: but more than this, the skilful singing of a Psalm differs not only in degree but in kind from the unskilled singing of the same: untaught singing may produce a fine body of melody under favourable circumstances, but it will not produce harmony; and harmony is that in which the power of music to a great extent consists: the music should be part-music, and this cannot be without careful study.

Some persons, I believe, hold that all congregational singing should be in unison, the voices of men women and children all joining in the melody. And doubtless a verse sung in unison by a large congregation has a very grand and massive effect; but it is carrying this too far to maintain that all hymns should be so sung, and indeed I think that nothing but want of skill can justify such a practice. But why need there be any want of skill? why should not all those in a Parish, to whom God has given any musical faculty, combine themselves in a Parish Choir for the purpose of learning the grammar of music and practising singing?

There is not so much need of laying stress upon this matter now, as there would have been some years ago. Undoubtedly much labour is being expended in many of our parishes upon music and part singing; and the large

amount of part-music that is published and sold is a good indication of the extent to which the movement is going on. Even now, however, there is a tendency to form Parish Choirs, and to attempt to make them sing without sound musical instruction: it is said sometimes that the members of the Choirs will not submit to the drudgery of learning to sing by note: if this be so, I am very sorry: I am sure that music like all other arts should be begun at the beginning, and that the music in our Churches cannot be as good as it ought to be, so long as the Choirs merely sing by ear and have no scientific knowledge of the notes.

Certainly there would be no complaint about drudgery, if they who joined the Parish Choir regarded themselves as persons preparing themselves to offer up a sacrifice to Almighty God. And I know there are cases, and not a few, in which the work of the Parish Choir is regarded as a religious duty to be performed seriously and solemnly as in God's sight: there are even instances in which the formation of a Choir has proved indirectly the moral regeneration of the Parish. This however is a part of the subject upon which I shall not dwell: I would only suggest that those who join a Choir would do well to remember the importance of the work they are undertaking, and the privilege which

they enjoy in being permitted to take a leading part in public worship[1].

Speaking generally I may suggest that the worshipping of God, not merely in the *decency* but even in the *beauty* of holiness, should be a matter of continual concern with all parishioners, specially with those who have any natural gift which they can devote to the service of the sanctuary. Why should Christians be lazy as regards their devotions? Does this make them more spiritual, or more acceptable in God's sight? Is a man more religious because Alto. Tenor and Bass are an unknown language to him? Or is not this true rather, that the service of the Church will take more hold on the affections and become a more living thing, in proportion as a person qualifies himself more completely to bear his part in the service? It was a soul very full of music that indited the words: "I was glad when they said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord."

[1] I have said nothing about *surpliced choirs*, which are now so common; and I only mention them in this note for the purpose of saying, that observation leads me to believe that the sense of responsibility which results from being marked as holding an official position does in practice operate upon the minds of young persons, and tends to solemnize their behaviour during divine service.

CHAPTER X.

SIMPLICITY OF DRESS.

"Clothed in white raiment."
Rev. iv. 4.

"Made white in the blood of the Lamb."
Rev. vii. 14.

ONE of the great evils of the day is an excessive indulgence in finery of dress. Every age has its peculiar evils, and this is one of those which belong to our own.

I do not suppose that there is any change in taste or natural propensity in such matters. The prophet Isaiah shews us, by his catalogue of female finery in the third chapter of his prophecy, that the "daughters of Zion" in his day have left very little for subsequent ages to add to the art of tricking out the body. "Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go,...therefore the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling

ornaments,...the chains and the bracelets,...the earrings, the rings,...the fine linen, and the hoods, and the vails[1]." A most curious and instructive catalogue.

But the peculiarity of our own times is that people not only have the love of finery, as they always had, but can easily indulge it; much more easily than in any former age. Finery is to be had for almost nothing, and a modern servant-girl with fair wages can make more show and parade than persons in affluent circumstances could make two centuries ago. This temptation of a cheap age tells upon the nation exceedingly, especially upon the female part of it; so that this book could make no pretension to being a complete guide to the service of God's House, if it did not contain a few words upon the kind of dress in which worshippers should appear.

There are proper dresses for proper times. We do not go to a funeral in cheerful garments, nor to a wedding in black. However much we may talk about the indifference of the manner in which we are dressed, a sure instinct tells us that it is not matter of indifference, and that it is most in accordance with the dictates of sound judgment to comply with those rules

[1] Isaiah iii. 16—23.

which custom has sanctioned. *Costume* and *custom* are really the same word. Now what is the dress best suited to the public worship of God? "All of you be clothed with humility," is a very good general answer: this points out the tone and colour of the garment of praise which befits a Christian in God's house. But more particularly, my dear reader, especially my dear female reader, study neatness and eschew finery; and do this both for your own sake, and for the sake of others.

For your own sake: because you should aim at forgetting self and thinking only of God. And how can you forget self, if you have been studiously getting yourself up to be admired, and if your own appearance has been haunting your brain all the morning before the Church bells began to ring?

For the sake of others: because, if your appearance is half as striking as you think it, you cannot but interfere with the devotions of your neighbours by attracting their attention to you. Oh! how utterly pitiable and shocking is any parade of finery in the presence of God! To think that that poor giddy creature, who is setting off her face and figure with ribands and silks, must soon appear before God naked and bare! When you stand before the looking-glass, think for one moment of death and judg-

ment! "It is easy," says S. Jerome, "for any one to despise all earthly things, if he will only bear in mind that he must die." "Consider," says another, "that you ought so to order every thought and deed, as if you were going to die to-day[1]."

Frippery and finery are offensive at all times and in all places: the real ornament is the "meek and quiet spirit:" this ornament is of great price with God[2], as with ourselves: it is one which a Christian may carry out of this world and wear for evermore: it is the necklace of angels: and while all other adornments are in the eyes of God tinsel and worthless, the price of this is greater than of fine gold. But frippery and finery in a Church are offensive beyond all possibility of measure or description: it is to insult the God of the place, to scare away the angels, to shock the minds of the devout. Study neatness and propriety and simplicity, but eschew extravagance and finery: imagine the blessed Virgin Mary preparing herself to go to the marriage at Cana in Galilee: dress yourself as you would have done, if you too had been invited to that marriage to meet the Lord.

[1] *Imitation of Christ*, Bk. I. Chap. xxiii.
[2] 1 S. Peter iii. 4.

One great disadvantage of extremely smart dress being worn upon a Sunday, is that persons so dressed will generally be afraid of injuring their clothes by kneeling. George Herbert says that "kneeling ne'er spoil'd silk stockings," but I am quite sure that many persons are in great fear lest kneeling should spoil silk dresses. Now kneeling is, as I have already endeavoured to make as clear as possible, a necessary part of worship; and therefore if a smart dress prevent kneeling, it may be very good for some purposes, but clearly is not suitable for a Church.

Of course in all things of this kind there is a fitness and propriety, which may be discovered by those who will endeavour to do so in the fear of God. That which may be quite appropriate for one person, may be quite inappropriate for another. The unchristian thing is to ape a degree of splendour which we cannot support, as when a maidservant dresses herself to look like a duchess. Independently of all consideration of Church-going, this over-dressing is wrong: it involves an extravagance which ought not to be indulged: frequently it is supported at the expense of piety,—as for instance when a young woman spends in finery what might be given for the comfort of an aged parent. It involves too the thoroughly wrong

principle of dressing for dressing's sake, making dress an end not a means, putting the "lust of the eye" and the "pride of life" in the place of that decent covering of our nakedness, which was rendered necessary by the entrance of sin into the world—

> Why should our garments, made to hide
> Our parent's sin, provoke our pride?

These are points upon which much more might be said, if it were to my purpose to say it: but I am chiefly engaged with dress, as it stands in relation to public worship, and in such relation more than in any other it is necessary to study the fitness and propriety of which I have been speaking, because the Church is nothing else than the presence-chamber of the Great King.

If any one should think that it is below the dignity of a Guide to the Parish Church to give advice and direction concerning dress, he may remember that S. Paul would have been of a different opinion. Let him look at that chapter in the first Epistle to the Corinthians[1], in which the Apostle directs that women should have their heads covered in Church, and silences those who might contend for the contrary practice by saying, "we have no such custom,

[1] 1 Cor. xi.

neither the Churches of God." And on the general question of the kind of dress suitable to Christian women, he may consult the third chapter of S. Peter's first general Epistle (from which two or three words have been quoted already), where amongst other things the Apostle writes, "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting of the hair, and of wearing of gold, and of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Lastly it may not be amiss to bear in mind the "white robes" in which the saints of God are represented as worshipping in Heaven, according to the vision granted to S. John.

CHAPTER XI.

THE OCCASIONAL INTRODUCTION OF THE BAPTISMAL SERVICE.

"A good profession before many witnesses."
1 Tim. vi. 12.

IN the form given in the Book of Common Prayer for the public administration of the Sacrament of Baptism, it is ordered that the administration shall take place after the reading of the second lesson, either in the morning or in the evening service, "as the Curate by his discretion shall direct." This place is marked out, not as on the whole the best place, but as the only place, for the introduction of the Baptismal service: no discretion is left to the clergyman[1], and though in some Churches a different

[1] I do not say that no discretion ought to be left to him, and it has in fact been suggested by the Ritual Commissioners that the rubric should be amended so as to run thus: "The godfathers and godmothers and the people with the children, must be ready at the Font, either immediately after the

practice is adopted, such practice has no sanction in the Book of Common Prayer. I do not mention this for the purpose of throwing blame upon any one, but because unfortunately the regulations of the Prayer Book have in some parishes been so long neglected, that a clergyman who baptizes infants after the second lesson is regarded as making an innovation[1], whereas in fact he has no option left to him, but is plainly ordered to baptize then, and in general at no other time.

But is there any good reason for the rule. Certainly, very good reason indeed. The Baptism of infants is to take place in public, when the congregation of Christian people are met together, on two grounds: first, that the child may have the benefit of the prayers of the

last lesson at Morning or Evening Prayer, *or at the conclusion of the Litany if the Litany is used as a separate service, or at such other time as the Curate by his discretion shall appoint.*" I am quite of opinion that this enlargement of the discretion of the Curate would be a great gain, and that in many instances he is compelled to do what the revised rubric would permit; but it remains equally true that it is most suitable that Baptism should take place as part of the Morning or Evening Service, where no strong reason exists to the contrary.

[1] In some parishes, within my own experience, the dissatisfaction manifested by the parishioners has been so great, that the clergyman has found it impossible to revert to the rubrical order.

Church; secondly, that the congregation may have the advantage of having their own minds refreshed with a remembrance of their own baptism, and may so be stirred up to adorn their profession. I hardly know to which of these two grounds to assign the more weight: both of them are highly important: both of them go to prove the point which I have now in mind, namely, that the public baptism of infants is not a service at which the congregation merely happen to be present, not one to which they are to listen impatiently, as though it were an interruption of that in which they are engaged, but that it is a service in which they are all to join, no interruption of the general worship but a part of it,—a service in which charity for the helpless infant and gratitude for their own adoption in Jesus Christ, alike demand that they should join with all their hearts.

When therefore you perceive that a child is about to be baptized, do not sit lazily down as though to wait with as much resignation as may be until the service is finished, but at once turn to the order for "The Ministration of Public Baptism of Infants" in your Prayer-book, and prepare to take part in the solemn service which is about to commence. In truth it is, rightly considered, one of the most affecting of services, and one in which a truly Christ-like mind will

more feelingly join than almost any other. For the solemn bringing of a little child to Christ to be by Him blest and adopted as a child of God, does seem to set forth in so bright a manner the helplessness of man and the compassion of God, that the heart of him who looks upon the baptism of a child as a real spiritual thing, a true sacrament, having an inward grace as well as an outward form, can hardly be otherwise than deeply stirred by witnessing the solemnity. Look upon baptism as the orthodox process for giving the child a name, and the service is a tiresome addition to the morning or evening prayers: look upon baptism as the actual bringing of little children to Christ, and as the memorial of having been once brought to Him yourself, and then the service is one which will call forth the warmest devotional feelings and give rise to the most useful self-questionings.

Thus much it seemed necessary to say, because certainly the public baptism of infants is sometimes not regarded as it ought to be: more I think I need not say. The sum of the matter is this: regard the service for baptism as no interruption of the worship in which you are joining: the service is still for you: parts of it no doubt are addressed only to the sponsors, but even these are profitable as calling to your mind the vows and promises once made for you,

and which you perhaps have sometimes made as sponsor yourself. Throw your heart into the service, and you will perceive the wisdom of the public ministration of baptism, and will rejoice that you are permitted to join in an office which is so full of the spirit of Christ[1].

[1] Still greater solemnity was given to Baptism in the ancient Church by the appointment, not merely of a particular period in the public service at which it should be administered, but of special seasons in the year when the ministration should take place. "The Church appointed," says Bingham, "certain stated seasons and solemn times of baptism in ordinary cases, allowing her ministers still the liberty to anticipate these times, if either catechumens were very great proficients, or in danger of death by any sudden accident or distemper. The most celebrated time among these was Easter; and next to that, Pentecost, or Whitsuntide, and Epiphany, or the day on which Christ was supposed to be baptized." This appointment of great days for baptism would manifestly be very wise, because very instructive, in days in which the baptism of adult converts was a thing of constant requirement; in our own days and country, in which infant baptism is the rule and adult the rare exception, such baptismal festivals would be perhaps inconvenient; but it would be a great loss to the Church if the publicity of baptism, as now ordered, should ever become obsolete.

CHAPTER XII.

THE USE OF CREEDS.

"Hold fast the form of sound words."
2 Tim. i. 13.

THE use of Creeds, or recitation of forms of Christian belief, in the public service is a feature of the worship of the Church of England, as of other branches of the Catholic Church, which it is desirable to notice and to explain. The Creeds were not originally composed for this purpose, neither is it the only one to which they are now applied; but it is a very important one, more important than careless people would be willing to believe. There is always danger lest forms which are ancient and established should receive less consideration than they deserve; we suppose that things ought to be as they are because they are so, and then perhaps some caviller finds fault with a form or an arrangement in public worship, and we are surprised to find ourselves at a loss for an answer; we have

in fact never really weighed the matter, and the first flippant objector gains an advantage over us. Nor can we ourselves receive all the benefit from our public service, which as intelligent children of the Church we ought to receive, unless we appreciate the meaning and wisdom of all its most important features.

Now the introduction of a Creed into every service is just one of those points which may have given a careless worshipper no trouble, but which may be easily remarked upon by an objector, and the meaning of which we ought to understand. The question is, why should the repetition of a number of articles of faith be introduced in the midst of prayers and praises and other acts of worship? Possibly if the public services of the Church had been arranged in modern times, this part of them would have been different: possibly we should have had nothing but prayers and hymns, no Creeds: yet the existing order may be right after all, and the very fact that it clashes somewhat with modern spiritual taste may be a reason why we should look into the matter carefully, and see whether it be right or wrong.

Three different Creeds are found in the Book of Common Prayer. The simplest is that which we call the Apostles' Creed; and this is the one most frequently repeated, being introduced into

the ordinary morning and evening service. It consists almost entirely of a plain statement of the truths which we believe concerning the three Persons of the Holy Trinity; and a large part of it is the rehearsal of the facts of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ our Lord. This simplest of Creeds may be described as the Baptismal Symbol: it is the formula of profession which gives those who hold it a right of entrance by Baptism into the Christian Church.

The second is that which is known as the Nicene Creed. It is used in the service of the Holy Communion, and is repeated whenever the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is administered, or when the first portion of that service (as in many of our Churches) is read. This Creed is an enlargement of the former, containing no new articles of faith, but presenting the statements in a more defined manner, so as to avoid the possibility of wrong interpretation after the fashion attempted by various heretics.

The third is commonly known as the Creed of S. Athanasius; not that it was composed by him, as has sometimes been imagined; but it may worthily bear his great name, as presenting in the most marked and forcible manner those parts of the Catholic doctrine for which

S. Athanasius contended at the risk of his life, and which he was the chief instrument in God's hands of delivering down as the undoubted heritage of the Church. This Creed is used much less frequently than the others, being substituted for the Apostles' Creed on certain Sundays and holidays, so that on the whole it is repeated, if the rubric be observed, about thirteen times in the course of the year[1].

These Creeds then are rehearsed by Christian congregations as a portion of the ordinary worship of the Church. Why is this?

In the first place it may be remarked, that in early times the practice might seem to be almost indispensable, because in the absence of

[1] It may be well to remark, that the Creed commonly called the Nicene, is not actually identical with the Creed agreed upon in the great Council of Nicæa; it differs however only in one clause, namely, that concerning the Procession of the Holy Ghost, which was added at the General Council of Constantinople (A.D. 381), against the heresy of Macedonius. The clauses added were, "The Lord and Giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the prophets." The further interpolation of the words "and the Son" after the words "from the Father," which has proved such an abundant spring of discord between East and West, belongs to a subsequent time and to different circumstances. The origin and date of the Creed of S. Athanasius has always been a question of difficulty, and the difficulty can scarcely be said to have been removed

printed books the only safeguard for the holding of the true Faith by the people in general would be the knowledge of a convenient "form of sound words," and their continued profession of assent to it. The form of sound words, upon the acknowledgment of which they had been baptized, would be the popular compendium of the Gospel; and to join in repeating it would ensure its being well remembered, would be a pledge of constancy in the faith, and would be the means of making the Gospel known to others. And though the circumstances of our times are to a considerable extent different, still the constant retention in the memory of a form of sound words, which exhibit in the smallest compass possible the great features of the

by all the discussion which has taken place of late years. In the first edition of this book I stated that the Creed might safely be asserted not to have existed in the first four centuries; and I quoted the date of A.D. 401 as given by Mr Harvey in his *History and Theology of the Three Creeds*, and the date of A.D. 429 as given by Waterland. Possibly even the later of these dates may be too early; but on the other hand it appears to me that those controversialists have quite failed to establish their position, who have endeavoured to bring the date of the Creed down to the period of Charlemagne. It would however be quite contrary to the whole scope and character of the Guide to the Parish Church to introduce the arguments which have been used in the controversy. Let it suffice that on the most extreme supposition the Creed of S. Athanasius is a most ancient and venerable document.

Gospel, and upon the profession of which we were made "members of Christ," must be as useful now as ever. And the frequent repetition of this form is the best practical method of ensuring its retention in the memory; so that the introduction of it into the ordinary service may be regarded as the best mode of complying with S. Paul's injunction to Timothy, "*Hold fast* the form of sound words."

But it may be thought that this mode of viewing the repetition of Creeds belongs more to the past than to the present: it may be assumed that in these days of books we have no occasion to fix, by means of frequent repetition, articles of faith which are sufficiently fixed by other means. Let it be observed, however, that in days of books, quite as much as in a ruder age, some means are required for testifying in an intelligible manner what kind of faith it is upon which the Church is built, and that this purpose is answered in an admirable manner by the habitual recital of the Apostles' Creed. For consider how at different periods of the Church's history, especially in modern times, the views of large numbers of men have fluctuated concerning the nature of the faith which a Christian ought to possess. Consider how men have contended concerning the nature of justifying faith, the manner in which a sinner

is justified before God, the connection of justification with sanctification, the ground of the divine election, the possibility of Christians falling away from grace received; all these and fifty other points, we have been told by various teachers or controversialists, are of the essence of the faith, are fundamental points; and if a Creed had been composed in modern times, during the ascendancy of any one of the numerous schools of religious opinion, we should almost certainly have found embodied in it some one or more of these doctrinal points. What has preserved us? Mainly the retention and familiar use of a form of sound words which has come down to us from early times. In the weariness of theological controversy we seem to find repose in that simple form of words, in which the Church teaches us, in unison with holy men of all ages, to profess our faith in God the Father who made us, in God the Son who redeemed us, and in God the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us. I do not of course intend to assert that such points as those of which I have given a sample, are unworthy of discussion, or points concerning which there is no truth to be discovered or established; but they belong for the most part rather to the philosophy of religion (so to speak) than to religion itself, and the advantage of the Apostles' Creed is, that it

leads us past all such speculations concerning Christ up to Christ Himself, it points our eyes to Jesus Christ born of a Virgin, betrayed, crucified, buried, risen, ascended,—shews us His wounds, points to His triumph, and having assured our faith in Him as the personal Lord and Saviour of mankind, leaves us planted upon a Rock which nothing in earth or hell can shake. So important is it for Christians to have their eyes thus rightly directed to the great object of their faith, that it is impossible to repeat too frequently or too earnestly the form of words which is appointed for the purpose of thus directing them: the constant repetition tends under God to ensure a healthy tone of mind, and is a constant protest against false or distorted views of the faith, which may happen to prevail or be in fashion in any particular era of the Church's history.

This use of the Creeds goes beyond mere distortion of doctrine, which may be produced within the Church by those who are very earnest in the faith, but who have a zeal not altogether according to knowledge. The Creeds, according to the view now taken of them, are also useful as defences of the Faith against those who would in a hostile spirit assail it, by putting in a clear and simple manner what the Church expects that her children should hold. You

may be told, for instance, in conversation with persons who wish to shake and injure the Christian religion, that such or such views are unreasonable and untenable; and when you examine what these unreasonable and untenable views are, you probably find that they are speculations of Christian doctors, which may or may not be true, and of which the Apostles' Creed says not one word. For example, a person may press you upon the doctrine of inspiration, may overwhelm you with difficulties, may give you the impression that he is demolishing the Christian faith, because he is knocking down certain speculations which certain Christian philosophers have devised: if this should happen, it may be an infinite relief to consider that on this point, and on many others, the Authorised Creed of the Church commits you to no special view: it may be possible to arrive at the truth by patient investigation, or it may be impossible, but anyhow it is not absolutely necessary that on every point you should be able to arrive at the truth; and therefore an adversary wastes his weapons, who expends them upon a doctrine, concerning which there may even be a considerable amount of consent amongst Christians, but concerning which there is nothing defined in the Church's Creeds.

Observe, I do not say that there are no points of importance in divinity besides those which the Creeds contain; but I say that upon profession of belief in those Articles which the Apostles' Creed does contain, any person may be admitted by Baptism into the Church, and that consequently a Christian needs not of necessity to believe a single article beyond those which this Creed embraces, and that an adversary who attacks any other point may possibly prove the unreasonableness or inconsistency of individual Christians, or of individual sects, but not the unreasonableness or inconsistency of the Faith of the Church of Christ.

This view of the use of the Creeds will, I apprehend, increase in importance as it is more examined and dwelt upon. Of course it will have no force as regards those who object to Creeds altogether; and some, as we know, do go as far as this. With regard to this view I will make only one observation, but it is one which I deem worthy of serious attention. The Christian religion is built upon the truth of what Jesus Christ our Lord suffered and did: if the life and death and resurrection and ascension of our Lord be a "cunningly devised fable," then of course there is an end of all argument: if this be proved, the Christian must be silent: but supposing the story to be real,

then it is upon this real story that our religion is based: it is no curious dogma that we rest upon, but plain history; and that history therefore we record in as short and emphatic a form as may be; upon it we take our stand; any objection to the Apostles' Creed must be supported, not by general reasoning upon the evil of dogmas, but by a disproof of those facts which the Creed records.

In the preceding sentence, I have especially named the *Apostles'* Creed, and it is to this formula that the historical character of which I have spoken chiefly belongs. It is this Creed the use of which it is most important to vindicate, both because it is that upon the profession of which we were baptized, and because it is that which is adopted by the Church as the form for ordinary use in the Morning and Evening Prayers. It would take me beyond my purpose to discuss those peculiarities by which the Creeds, commonly called the Nicene and that of S. Athanasius, are distinguished from the Apostles'. I may suggest however that there is no reason to suppose that Christians require in this age, less than in preceding ages of the Church, a frequent admonition of the fulness of Christian doctrine, and of the danger of being led away into heresies. As for the Nicene Creed, though it was the result of

the most deadly controversy that ever agitated the Christian Church, yet we may notice, and we may recognize the goodness of God in the fact, that the Creed itself may be said to be entirely free from a controversial character. It bears no mark of the storms in which it was born. The simplest Christian, who knows nothing concerning the Arian controversy and the history of the great Council at Nicæa, may join Sunday after Sunday in expressing his faith in Him, who was no mere man nor angel, but who was "begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made;" and he may find in such language, though he could never have framed it for himself, the brightest portrait that he can conceive of Him to whom the Scriptures give testimony.

Concerning "the Confession of our Christian Faith, commonly called The Creed of S. Athanasius," and the rule of our Church which orders it to be sung or said on certain occasions at Morning Prayer, "instead of the Apostles' Creed," a few words must be said, because objection is not unfrequently made both to the rule which directs the public rehearsal of the Creed, and also to some parts of the Creed itself. The objection takes from time to time

the form of public and warm controversy, as has of late years been the case in a very conspicuous manner. So far as the Creed itself is concerned, the objection chiefly depends upon the assertion that he who "does not keep the Catholic Faith whole and undefiled shall, without doubt, perish everlastingly." So far as the use of it in public is objected to, it must be at once admitted that the Church of England recites it as a portion of the service in a way which finds a parallel in the practice of scarcely any other Church, and that the wisdom of the English practice is fairly open to criticism and discussion. Upon this question of use however I do not wish to say more than this, that I think it unnecessary to maintain that the safety of the Church and the prevalence of orthodox belief at all depend upon the public recital of a formula, such as the Creed of S. Athanasius[1]: but as my purpose is to supply something of the nature of a Guide to those who attend the Parish Church, in which this Creed is ordered to

[1] The Athanasian Creed is not contained in the Prayer-book of the American Church. The Irish Church, since its disestablishment, has retained the Creed, but ordered the omission of certain clauses in the public recitation of it. The order for using the Creed of S. Athanasius, in place of the simple Apostles' Creed, by ordinary parochial congregations, is, I believe, peculiar to our own Church.

be recited, and as those who attend the Parish Church will therefore hear, or be called upon to recite, the "damnatory" phrase which I have quoted, I shall give two or three hints, which may perhaps have the effect of leading my readers to reflect whether the strong language adopted by the Creed may not be, not merely harmless, but even profitable both for doctrine and for reproof.

In the first place, let it be remembered, that the clause in question is not the only one in the Creed which speaks of "perishing everlastingly." At the close of the Creed we find it asserted, that at the coming of Christ "all men shall rise again with their bodies, and shall give account of their own works. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting, and they that have done evil into everlasting fire." Here then we have an assertion as clear and broad as possible, that the great judgment of God will be, as the Scriptures declare, a judgment according to works. If there be any tendency in our minds to imagine, that it is in accordance with this Creed to make everlasting life depend merely upon a particular form of belief, the concluding portion of the Creed should correct such an imagination. The Creed does, in fact, in this respect exhibit as in a mirror the character of the Holy Scriptures themselves, in which it is hard to say whether greater stress is laid

upon holding the faith, or upon works done in the body.

In the next place, whether we do or do not adopt the language of this Creed, yet we do in fact adopt its principles whenever we speak of *saving faith*, or use the like phrases. And if to hold the Catholic Faith be our title to eternal life, as in a certain and very true sense it is, inasmuch as the knowledge of God[1] is that which constitutes the Catholic Faith, then what can be the result of not holding and keeping undefiled that same faith, when once it has become ours, except the loss of eternal life,—which is what the Creed declares? If a person should interpret the clause as asserting that any one, who has the least doubt as to the particular expression given to the Articles of the Catholic Faith in this Creed being in every way a perfect expression of the same, shall as a punishment for that doubt suffer eternal pain, it seems clear that he would misinterpret the Creed. The Creed declares in general terms the danger of not holding fast the Faith; it then goes on to define certain points, concerning which there is a liability to error; but it is not and cannot be intended by those definitions to lay snares for simple Christians, and to support the notion

[1] S. John xvii. 3.

that saving faith consists in the knowledge of theological subtleties, and not in the knowledge of Christ Himself, which leads to purity and holiness of life.

And once more, I think that the worshipper in the Parish Church will find the difficulties of the language of this Creed very much softened, if he regards the "damnatory" or monitory clauses not as a condemnation of others, but as a warning to himself. Some persons seem to imagine that in the use of the Creed each Christian stands up as the judge of his brethren, and as declaring that all who think differently from himself upon certain mysterious points are liable to God's wrath: but it is a more excellent way for each Christian in repeating the solemn words of the Creed to regard those words as uttering the warning of God to himself, lest *he* should make shipwreck of the faith. There is at least no want of charity in the language used, if each Christian worshipper regards himself, not as denouncing heresy in others, but as arming and warning himself against the dangers of heresy.

Thus much it seemed necessary to say concerning a point which must necessarily give rise to strong difference of opinion and warm controversy, so long as the Creed of S. Athanasius is retained in its present place and use.

Various suggestions have been made for adopting a compromise in which all may agree; but hitherto without success. Passing away however from this controverted ground, let me bring to a close my remarks upon the use of the Creeds in the public service by presenting for a moment a higher view of the subject than any which I have hitherto given. The rehearsal of Creeds may be regarded preeminently as an act of worship, and a pledge of loyalty to our Lord Jesus Christ. The spirit of the practice may be said to be exhibited in the conduct of that blind man, of whom we read in S. John's Gospel[1], as having been healed by Christ. When this man had been excommunicated by the Jews because he defended the character of Him who had given him his sight, our Lord found him and examined him concerning his faith. "Dost thou believe in the Son of God?" said Christ: and when, in answer to the question, "Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?" Christ revealed Himself, saying, "Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee," the man at once professed his allegiance, saying, "Lord, I believe!" The Evangelist adds, "and he worshipped Him." Why should he not? Rather, how could he refrain himself? If his faith in the Son of God

[1] S. John ix.

was worth anything, what was his profession of faith, but itself an act of worship? If he believed himself to be in the presence of Him, who could without blasphemy declare Himself to be the Son of God, how could he do less than acknowledge the presence of Deity by the devoutest sign of outward reverence? The profession of faith in Christ was, in this case, no cold formal declaration of belief, but a heartfelt act of allegiance, a declaration of unswerving loyalty. And there is no reason why our own profession of faith should not be of the same kind. He who regards the Creed in this light will probably find that there is no form of thanksgiving, no hymn of praise, no Christian doxology, which more warms his heart and excites deep feelings of gratitude and love, than the Creeds which he is taught to repeat.

Of all mischievous innovations proposed in modern times, perhaps the removal of Creeds from the public worship of the Church is nearly the most pernicious and the most to be deprecated[1].

[1] There are some very valuable remarks upon the existence and use of Creeds in Maurice's *Kingdom of Christ*, Part II. Chap. IV. From the *Revised Prayer-book*, which I have criticized further on, all Creeds are omitted. The ground of the omission is explained in the Preface to the book: the real value of Creeds as a part of worship is strangely overlooked.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SERMON.

"Preach the Word."
2 Tim. iv. 2.

ONLY one Sermon in the day is positively ordered by the Book of Common Prayer. After the rehearsal of the Nicene Creed, the Curate is directed to give notice of Holydays and the like, and this Rubric follows: "Then shall follow the Sermon, or one of the Homilies already set forth, or hereafter to be set forth, by authority." This Sermon then is the sermon of the day: and if the whole Parish could attend the morning service, this one sermon would perhaps be sufficient for all purposes, and the afternoon would be open for catechising, which in many ways and in many cases would be found a more profitable exercise than preaching. But the practice has now become almost universal of making a sermon a part of both morning and evening service, and inasmuch as in many places it is found impracticable to persuade the poorer class of people to attend the Church in the morning, it is probably necessary that a second

sermon should be added. Nor can any fault be found with the practice, except the tendency which it has to discourage public catechizing.

When we reflect that in the greater number of the Parish Churches of England there are two, and in many three sermons preached every Sunday, to say nothing of a large number preached upon other days, we feel perhaps disposed at first to think that we have here an instrument of almost incalculable power for the promotion of religion. On second thoughts we are probably still more disposed to marvel at the comparative smallness of the effect which appears to result from such a complete machinery for teaching. The truth, I believe, lies in the middle: that is, we shall be right in supposing that the power of the Christian pulpit is indeed great, but that it is not what it ought to be, and what (one would think) it might be. Much of the failure of sermons may be attributed, it is to be feared, to the fault of the preachers: either they are careless, or unskilful, or inconsistent in their practice, or their own hearts are dark and their minds unenlightened; "those who would make us feel must feel themselves;" under such conditions there can be no wonder if the voice from the pulpit be "as sounding brass or as a tinkling cymbal."

If I were writing for preachers and not for people, I might have much to say concerning the manner in which the pulpit should be used, so as to make it in God's hand a successful engine for beating down the strongholds of Satan: but I am writing for people, not for preachers, for those who attend the Parish Church to worship God, to hear His Word, to be admonished and taught; and therefore I shall say nothing of any blame which may attach to the preacher, but shall assume that the teaching is plain and good, such as (God be thanked!) it is in the greater number of our Churches, and shall inquire how the preaching is to be received so that it may bear fruit and prosper to the end for which God has sent it.

The first and most obvious remark is that which George Herbert expresses when he says,

"Judge not the preacher, for he is thy judge."

It is quite clear that a person puts himself entirely in the wrong position with regard to his spiritual teacher, if he allows himself any great liberty in criticizing the sermons which he hears. Of course a preacher is not infallible, and the parishioners have a right to "search the Scriptures whether these things are so[1]:" but

[1] Acts xvii. 11.

certainly the general tone of mind upon the part of the hearer should be that of respectful attention, a desire to find good if good may be found, a readiness to apply to his own heart and conscience and conduct any hints which may have been given, rather than to remark upon the preacher's peculiarities or to make light of his powers.

There are two dangers of opposite kinds, into either of which we may fall; and so far as the great result which Satan desires to attain is concerned, namely, that of neutralizing Christian teaching, it is all the same whether a person fall into one or into the other. The first is that of despising God's Minister; the second is that of too much honouring him. Those who spoke of S. Paul lightly, describing his bodily presence as weak and his speech as contemptible, were probably not more mischievous in the Church nor greater enemies to themselves, than those others who wished to make the Apostle the head of a party, saying, "I am of Paul", in opposition to the "I am of Cephas", and "I am of Christ", which were the watchwords of some of their fellows. And it may be worth noting, in connection with this remark upon the manner in which S. Paul was treated by different classes of converts, that the two faults which have been mentioned were both found in the same Church,

namely, that of Corinth. In the first chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians we find the Apostle thanking God that he had baptized only two or three persons in Corinth, because he had thus taken away all shadow of pretence from those who wished to form themselves into a party around him. He says[1], "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in my own name." Here we find the Apostle contending against those who would honour him too much, and virtually put him in the place of his Master. Now let us look to the second Epistle written to the same Church; and there we find him expressing himself thus: "Though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed: that I may not seem as if I would terrify you with letters. For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible[2]." We see then, as I have said, that they who fell into the mistake of honouring S. Paul too much, and they who fell into the opposite mistake of criti-

[1] 1 Cor. i. 13—15. [2] 2 Cor. x. 8—10.

cizing him and despising him, were persons who had had the same advantages, the same religious teaching, the same opportunities of hearing and knowing concerning the Apostle, being inhabitants of the same city and members of the same Church.

Nor is it so strange as may at first sight appear, that these two errors should have co-existed. For the root of the two was nearly or perhaps quite the same, namely this, that each class of persons made the mistake of looking to their teacher too much as the man Paul, too little as Paul the Apostle of Christ. So long as S. Paul was regarded as an ambassador, the attention of Christians to whom he was sent would be fixed upon Him who sent him, and then all would be of one mind because all would be one in Christ, and would regard Paul's message as His: but when once they deserted this true and safe ground, and regarded Paul as a man, then it became a question of individual taste and fancy on which side each hearer should range himself. To one man Paul would be the leader and guide, to the practical exclusion of Christ: to another, "his bodily presence would be weak and his speech contemptible."

So in our own times, it is hard to say which class of persons are likely to profit less by sermons; those who extol and idolize the

preacher, or those who make it their practice to criticize and condemn him.

Another remark may be made concerning sermons. It is very necessary to preserve the sermon in its due place of subordination to the rest of the service. I have already spoken of the Church, as being not merely a house of preaching[1], but still more emphatically a house of Prayer and a house of Sacraments: it is

[1] This point is well put by Bishop Bull. "Prayer is the principal and most noble part of God's worship, and to be preferred before preaching: nay indeed, to speak strictly and properly, preaching is no part of divine worship; for every proper act of divine worship must have God for its immediate object, and God's glory for its immediate end. But the immediate object of preaching are men, to whom it is directed, and the immediate end of it is the instruction of men; though it is true, in the ultimate end of it, it tends to and ends in the glory of God, as indeed all religious actions do, and all our other actions of moment should do. But prayer is immediately directed to God Himself, and it is an immediate glorification of Him, and a paying of divine worship and honour to Him. In a word, by preaching we are taught how to worship God; but prayer is itself God's worship. Hence the place of God's worship is styled by our Saviour, *the house of prayer* (Matth. xxi. 13). It is not called a *preaching house* (though there must be preaching there too at due times and seasons), but a *house of prayer*, because prayer is the principal worship of God, to which all religious houses are dedicated, and it is the constant and daily business to be performed in them." (Serm. XIII. *Works*, vol. i. p. 327.)

necessary for every one who goes to Church to bear this in mind, and, the degree in which a Christian profits by sermons may perhaps be measured by the devotion and earnestness with which he joins in Common Prayer. For the one leading idea of Church Service should be that of worship, that of knowing God, hallowing His Name, and praying that His Kingdom may come; and that part of the divine office which is more particularly devoted to teaching and exhortation will be most effectual for its purpose, when it is restrained from usurping the first place which belongs to the worship of God. We may perhaps apply in this case those words of our Lord: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all other things shall be added unto you[1]." Let prayer and worship come first; the benefit of sermons will be assuredly added.

What has been said of prayer, applies still more strongly to the holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper: and the application is the more striking because the Church, as I have already remarked, makes the sermon a part of the Communion Office, and it may therefore be said to be manifest, that if the sermon does not lead to the Lord's Table it fails to a great extent of

[1] S. Matt. vi. 33.

its purpose. But whether this be a right interpretation to put upon the position of the sermon or not, this is certain, that the Holy Communion being the highest of Christian privileges and the greatest of Christian mysteries, every preacher must feel that he has missed his mark, if he has not been able by his sermons either to bring his people to the Lord's Table, or at least to stir their hearts with solemn fears concerning their breach of duty in not going there. When the Sermon and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper stand quite apart from each other, and the one can be listened to, while the other is neglected, then it is clear that the sermon goes for nothing, or for very little; it fails to bring forth the right fruit, and whether the fault be in the preacher or in the people, the fact of the barrenness of the sermon remains the same.

Sermons, as much as Prayer and Sacraments, are to be accounted means of grace. I do not pretend to decide to which of these most importance is to be attributed: each has its own place, and each should receive all the attention that we can give to it: but I remark upon the necessity of accounting sermons to be means of grace, because in the case of sermons, as in that of Sacraments, the benefit received depends to a great extent upon the disposition of mind of the recipient. Therefore it is well that

Christians should not only give their own most earnest endeavours to understand and remember what God's servants say to them, but should also pray God to grant them the help of His Holy Spirit that they may hear to real profit. Nor will their task be complete when they have prayed for themselves: they are bound to remember the preacher also in their prayers: no one can say how much of the efficacy of a sermon may depend upon such co-operation on the part of the people: every preacher may find good cause to say, as S. Paul said to the Thessalonians, "Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified[1]."

A person who has prayed for himself and for the Minister who is to teach and exhort him, will probably be preserved from that evil which is the great destroyer of the effect of sermons, I mean the notion that things said in the pulpit have a kind of conventional sense different from that which belongs to them in the language of common life. How far this notion may be due to the fact that clergymen really *have* allowed themselves to adopt in their sermons a hollow unmeaning phraseology, and to use in the pulpit expressions which they

[1] 2 Thess. iii. 1.

cannot defend out of it, is a question upon which I shall not enter. I have no wish to throw all the blame from the clergy upon the laity. There has been and is undoubtedly blame upon both sides. But it is certain, that the clergy will be most likely to avoid empty talk which means nothing, and the laity will be most likely to eschew the mischievous notion that sermons *are* empty talk and *do* mean nothing, if both clergy and laity regard a sermon as a solemn means of grace, to be preached by one and to be heard by the other with prayer for God's blessing upon it.

The highest praise that can be awarded to a Parish Sermon is that which is given, when it is described as plain and practical: plain, so that all can understand it; practical, so that it may be made to bear directly upon the lives and conduct of those who hear it. The plainness must rest entirely with the preacher, and therefore I say nothing about it here; but with regard to the practical character of sermons, I will remark, that though one sermon may differ from another in the degree in which it bears upon practice, yet almost every sermon may be made in some degree a practical one, if those who listen to it will do their best to make it so. Every one should do with respect to all clergymen, what King Charles the First said that he

did with respect to Dr Sanderson. "I carry my ears," said the king, "to hear other preachers; but I carry my conscience to hear Mr Sanderson, and to act accordingly[1]." Many persons carry their ears with them to Church, and leave their consciences at home.

For indeed a sermon must be composed with singular perversity of mind, if there is not a hint from beginning to end which can be made useful to a person wishing to profit.

Anyhow there is the text; and that may be made into a practical sermon by those who try. I do not of course intend to deny that there is a great difference between one sermon and another with respect to utility, between one method and another of treating the same subject; but I wish to enforce the truth, that in reality sermons are practical or not according as they are or are not made by the hearers to bear upon their own practice. And be it ever remembered, that unless sermons are in this sense practical, they are useless. It is obvious, and yet somehow the truth is very often forgotten, that sermons are not intended so much to clear up theological difficulties, or to incite warm religious feelings, or to minister to enthusiasm, or to tickle the ears, as to guide the life, to

[1] Walton's *Life of Dr Robert Sanderson.*

warn men against sin, to instruct them of their dangers, to make them walk in the fear of the Lord. When the people of a Parish are led on in the ways of holiness and piety and the fear of God by the teaching which they receive in Church, then and then only are the sermons which they hear there, in the best sense of the word, practical.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

"As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come."
1 Cor. xi. 26.

IT would be inconsistent with the design of this book to introduce into it a chapter on preparation for receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Moreover many admirable books are in existence having this end in view. To go no further, Bishop Wilson's well-known manual is in the hands of almost every one.

It would be equally inconsistent to plunge into the discussion of deep doctrinal questions. Of course it is of great importance to have right knowledge, but the discussion which leads to such knowledge may be most usefully carried on away from the Parish Church. The Church is no place for controversy, and the devout worshipper will find all the exposition he requires

in the Church's own book: I do not believe that any better exposition can be found, especially when the book is interpreted by a disciple of Christ kneeling meekly upon his knees before the Table of the Lord.

What I propose to do is this, to make such remarks upon the order of administration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the Church of England, as may tend to lead the reader to form a right judgment concerning the importance which ought to be assigned to that ordinance in the services of the Parish Church.

In the first place, it may be noted that the method of conducting public worship in many of our Churches has the effect of putting the Holy Sacrament in a false position.

A large majority of English Churches are not open, as a general rule, except upon Sundays; and the Morning Service consists in many of them of the Morning Prayer appointed for daily use, the Litany appointed for Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and a portion of the Communion Service including a Sermon. Thus the Sunday Service is composed of three distinct Offices; and the only one of the three that is peculiar to the Sunday is broken off in the middle. If the people were in the habit of attending divine service every day, they would of course recognize those portions which give to

the Sunday Service its especial preeminence and majesty; but as this is not usually the case, the Morning Prayer comes almost of necessity to be regarded as the principal part of Sunday worship, and the Office for the Holy Communion occupies a quite subordinate place.

The reader will be kind enough to observe that I am not offering any opinion upon the practicability or desirableness of opening all our Churches for daily prayers: I am only pointing out that in perhaps nine Churches out of ten the system of worship has a tendency to give wrong notions as to what the character of Sunday worship ought to be. For of course the character of that worship is to be judged, not by those portions which are common to the Sunday with all the week, nor by those which are common to it with the Wednesday and Friday, but rather by those which belong specially to itself, and which are intended to confer upon Sundays and some other great Festivals a precedence above other days of public worship.

The fair mode of estimating the worship of the Church is to examine it as we find it in the Book of Common Prayer, and not as we find it interpreted by the habits of one particular age. The worship of a certain age or generation may be lax in practice, but if that practice be not stereotyped by any law of the Church we may

look for better days. If then we examine the Book of Common Prayer, we find that by far the greatest portion of it is devoted to the Office for the administration of the Holy Communion. In a closely printed copy which I have now before me, the daily Morning Prayer occupies three pages, the Evening Prayer two, the Litany with its Appendix of Prayers and Thanksgivings, three and a half; and then the remainder of the volume, exclusive of the occasional Offices, and occupying forty-five pages, belongs to the Holy Communion: for it will be remembered that the Collects, Epistles, and Gospels are part of the Communion Office; nay, the Sermon itself is, as before remarked, inserted by the rubric in this same Office. I do not of course lay much stress upon mere numbers of pages: if I did, I should perhaps be told that I had omitted from the Morning and Evening Prayer the consideration of the Psalms and Lessons. I only wish to shew that that service must be deemed a very important one, which, as a matter of fact, occupies the bulk of the book, and that the form of Sunday worship prevalent in many of our Parish Churches is calculated to mask and conceal the principle upon which the book is constructed. Suppose, for instance, that in any Church the daily office of prayer is performed every morning at eight o'clock, and that on Sundays, in ad-

dition to this usual service, there is a celebration at eleven o'clock of the peculiar service of the Lord's Day, namely that of the Holy Communion, is not the interpretation put upon the Book of Common Prayer by people in general likely to be different from that which they put upon it now? I do not say that this supposed separation of the services is desirable; I only remark that such separation would tend to this right conclusion, that the Holy Communion is that which is to be regarded as the great distinguishing feature of Sunday worship.

This conclusion it is very desirable that we should draw, both because it tends to prove that the Church of England does due honour to the chief mystery of the Christian faith, and because it points out her conformity with the practice of primitive antiquity. For it may be remarked, that although we commonly denote by the term *Liturgy* the whole service-book of the Church, yet the name properly, because originally, belongs to the service of the Holy Communion[1]. The learned writer to whom I have referred in the note tells us, that after a careful examination

[1] "In treating of the Liturgy, I would be understood to use the term in that restricted sense which it generally bears in the writings of the ancients; as denoting the service used in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. In the Eastern Churches, that service (though sometimes known by other appellations) has

of the primitive Liturgies of the Christian Church, it appears to him "that they may all be reduced to four, which have been used in different Churches from a period of profound antiquity." After enumerating these, he continues: "These four great Liturgies appear to have been the parents of all the forms now extant, and indeed all which we can in any way discover; and their antiquity was so very remote, their use so extensive in those ages when bishops were most independent, that it seems difficult to place their origin at a lower period than the Apostolic age." It is not my purpose to shew how far the Office of the English Church agrees with these ancient Offices, though the investigation is interesting and profitable; it is sufficient to have pointed out to attendants at the Parish Church, that the Communion Office is founded upon these ancient and perhaps Apostolical models, and that the prominence and importance assigned to this service by the English Church is quite agreeable to primitive usage.

The solemnity and extreme beauty and fit-

long borne the title of the *divine* or *mystical* liturgy. In the West, the Eucharistic office has most commonly been called *missa;* but the term liturgy has also been frequently applied to it."—Palmer's *Antiquities of the English Ritual: Dissertation on Primitive Liturgies.*

ness of the service itself form a subject upon which I might say much, but shall say very little. It can be thoroughly appreciated only by those who study it practically, that is, by habitually joining in it. The service has undergone several changes since it was first translated and adapted from the ancient forms; and it may be that all the changes which have been made have not been improvements; but certainly the service as it now exists is a noble form of worship; it contains all things essential; it allows full play for the warm feelings of affectionate devotion and love, which can scarcely fail to be kindled in the heart of an earnest communicant.

There is one question upon which the Guide to the Parish Church is bound to say a few words; and that is, the frequency of Communion. It seems to me that to the general question, How often ought I to communicate? the answer ought to be, As often as you have opportunity[1]. I do not understand upon what

[1] Since the first edition of this book was published, the custom of *noncommunicating attendance* has very much grown in the English Church. I must content myself with saying that the custom is one which has no support in the habits of primitive times, and that the result in the case of the Roman Church has been very mischievous. See on the whole question, Scudamore, *Notitia Eucharistica*, Chap. XIII.

principle a worshipper can, except under special circumstances, absent himself from the chief portion of the worship. I cannot discuss all the cases which may occur and give advice concerning them: I have already referred to the existence of books, the aim of which is to help persons to examine themselves as to their fitness and to advise them upon their conduct; I content myself therefore with laying down the general principle, that we should join in Holy Communion as often as we have opportunity, and try to keep ourselves always in readiness for approaching the Lord's Table. Walton says of Hooker: "To maintain this holy fire of love constantly burning on the altar of a pure heart, his advice was to watch and pray, and always keep themselves fit to receive the Holy Communion, and then to receive it often; for it was both a confirming and strengthening of their graces[1]."

Another question occurs, namely, How often ought the Holy Communion to be celebrated? No well ordered Parish, I conceive, has less than a monthly celebration. Perhaps in some of our parishes it may not be desirable that there should be more; but undoubtedly weekly celebration is most in conformity with primitive

[1] Life of Richard Hooker.

practice, and even in Churches which adopt a different rule the reading of a portion of the Office for the Holy Communion every Sunday is a testimony against modern laxity. I have already spoken of the Communion Office as forming the great distinguishing feature of the Sunday Service; and unquestionably in apostolical and primitive times the celebration of the Eucharist was *the* Sunday Service: it was a meeting of the disciples "on the first day of the week to break bread[1]." If a Christian in the early ages of the Church had been asked to describe the worship in which he joined on Sunday, he would not have said, First we have prayers, and then a sermon; but he would have described the service of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. We have, in fact, a description of the service written by an early martyr in an Apology which he made for the Christians. It will be worth while to quote the passage in which the description occurs: it is given twice over, first in explaining the mode of entrance of a new convert into the society of the Brethren, and then again immediately afterwards in an account of the Sunday assemblies. The passage occurs in Justin Martyr's First Apology, a Defence of the Christians against

[1] Acts xx. 7.

their calumniators and persecutors. It was written about A.D. 150[1]. The interest which attaches to a picture of early Christian worship must excuse the length of the quotation.

"After a convert has been baptized we bring him to the place where those who are called Brethren are assembled together, in order that we may join in common prayer for ourselves, for him who has been illuminated[2], and for all other men everywhere, that having learned the truth we may also by our works approve ourselves good stewards and keepers of the commandments, so that we may obtain eternal salvation. Having concluded our prayers we salute each other with a kiss. Then bread and wine and water are brought to him who presides over the brethren, and he having received them ascribes praise and glory to the Father of all, in the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and gives thanks abundantly for these His gifts; these prayers and thanksgivings ended, all the people present answer and say, Amen, which in the Hebrew tongue signifies, So be it! And the president having given thanks and the people having answered, those who with us are called deacons give to each of those present a

[1] See Bishop Kaye's *Account of the Writings of Justin Martyr*, Chap. I.

[2] That is, baptized. See Heb. x. 32.

portion of the bread and wine and water over which thanksgiving has been made, and they carry of the same to those who are absent.

"And this food is called with us the Eucharist, of which it is lawful for none to partake, except those who believe that the things which we teach are true and who have been baptized with the baptism for the remission of sins and for regeneration, and who live according to the precepts of Christ. For we do not receive these as common bread nor as common drink; but, as Jesus Christ our Saviour having been made flesh by the Word of God took flesh and blood for our salvation, so also we have been taught that the food, by the conversion of which our blood and flesh are nourished, is, after thanksgiving made over it, with prayer expressed in His own words, the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh. For the Apostles, in those memoirs written by them which are called Gospels, have delivered to us that so Jesus commanded them; for He took bread, and having given thanks said, Do this in remembrance of Me, This is My body; and in like manner He took the Cup, and having given thanks He said, This is My blood; and He shared it with them only.....

"Afterwards we remind each other of these things; and those of us who possess the means

give aid to the rest, and we all live together in unity. And for all things which we enjoy we bless the Creator of all, through His Son Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit. And on the day which is called Sunday, a meeting takes place of all those who dwell either in town or country, when the writings of the Apostles and the books of the Prophets are read for as long a time as is convenient. The reader having ceased, the president gives admonition and exhortation to imitate these good examples. Then all rising up together we make our prayers. And, as I explained before, when we have ceased from prayer, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president offers up prayers and thanksgivings, as he is able, and the people answer and say, Amen: then distribution is made of the things over which thanksgiving has been made, and a portion is sent to those who are absent by the hands of the deacons. Those who have the means and the will give each as he feels disposed, and the collection is placed in the hands of the president, and he assists the orphans and widows, and those who are sick and needy, and those who are in prison, and those who are entertained among us being strangers; he becomes in fact the guardian of all who are in want. And the reason why we hold our common meetings upon Sunday is because it is

the first day, upon which God created the world, and on the same day Jesus Christ our Saviour rose again from the dead: for on the day before Saturday they crucified Him, and the day following Saturday, which is called Sunday, He appeared to His apostles and disciples, and taught them those things which we have brought under your notice[1]."

Such then was apostolical and primitive practice. We have a testimony to the same in the present practice of the Church of Rome; and though in many cases we should be wrong in appealing to the mode of worship adopted in that Church, inasmuch as certain features have been introduced notoriously unknown to primitive antiquity, still upon the great question of what the Sunday service was in the ancient Church and what it would be in a Church entirely accordant with the ancient model, the testimony is not to be despised. For though the service of the Mass be in its present form defiled by human additions and injured by human defects, still there can be no doubt as to the testimony borne by the traditions of the Roman Church to the great truth, that the celebration of the Eucharist was in primitive times the great feature of the Christian assemblies.

[1] Justin Martyr, *Apol.* I. §§ 65, 66, 67.

The Church of England, it is true, does not command a weekly celebration. It is even clear that such celebration is not contemplated as the usual practice. In certain exceptional cases, namely, Cathedral and Collegiate Churches and Colleges, a weekly Communion is enjoined[1]; and therefore by implication is supposed not to take place in other cases. Moreover, the Curate is ordered to give notice of an intended celebration upon some previous day, which would be unnecessary if the celebration were weekly and fixed; and in the Rubric before the Prayer for the Church Militant, directions are given as to what the Minister is to do "*When* there is a Communion," the case of there being no Communion being thus manifestly contemplated. Probably the great corruption which had been introduced during the Middle Ages with reference to the Mass and the consequent dread of superstition in connection with it, may account for the deviation of the compilers of our reformed service-book from the rule of primitive practice.

But it will be observed that weekly Communion is nowhere forbidden; and if the state of religious feeling in a Parish should seem to justify it, there is nothing to prevent such celebration at the discretion of the Minister. Nay, it

[1] See Rubric at the end of the Communion Office.

may be said that every Parish Priest should look to a weekly Communion as the point towards which he is ever tending, and no Parish can be regarded as perfect in its ordinances till this limit has been reached.

While however we rejoice that there is nothing in the laws and constitution of the Church of England to prevent a complete return to primitive practice, there may be too great haste in endeavouring to bring about such a reformation. The privilege of more frequent celebration of the Christian mysteries may be regarded as having been lost through the corruptions of the Church. If the extreme nature of the sickness had not called for violent remedies, Christians might still with one consent have been gathered together every first day of the week to break bread. Primitive practice will only return with primitive simplicity of faith and primitive earnestness of love. If Christians were all "of one heart and one soul[1]," and if all "continued steadfast in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship[2]," then probably they would all join likewise in the weekly "breaking of bread."

At the present time a weekly celebration of the Eucharist, though probably not much

[1] Acts iv. 32. [2] Acts ii. 43.

known in country districts, is becoming in our town churches no uncommon thing. The movement is advancing as rapidly as prudence dictates. Meanwhile we require both faith and hope: faith in the presence of God with His Church in England, and hope that she may be able to shew more and more, by the abundance of her fruitfulness, her vital union with the true Vine. This however we must remember, that wherever the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a seldom and exceptional portion of Christian worship, there we should do well to say as little as possible concerning the agreement of our practice with that of primitive antiquity.

CHAPTER XV.

PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

"Meddle not with them that are given to change."
Prov. xxiv. 21.

THE design of this book is to guide its readers to the Parish Church, and not to encourage them to listen to those who are given to change. Nevertheless as changes in the Book of Common Prayer are frequently discussed, as we have even a society established for the express purpose of bringing them about, it may be useful to discuss the subject announced at the head of this chapter.

"To seek reformation of evil laws," says Hooker, "is a commendable endeavour; but for us the more necessary is a speedy redress of ourselves." There is truth in this remark; and though it may be and is desirable, that such defects as exist in the system and service-book

of the Church of England should be known and remedied, still to the greater number of us an endeavour to make the best of what we have is a more excellent way, and a way in pursuing which steadily we shall probably lose sight of defects which at first appeared considerable; or still better, we may discover that the imagined defects existed only in our own eyes.

The changes of which I shall speak are those which if made would have, and would be intended to have, a doctrinal effect upon the Church Service; on mere changes of rubrical directions it is not necessary to dwell. Such changes may be desirable: the subject, as the reader probably knows, has been under discussion for some years, having been first examined by a Royal Commission, and then brought before the Convocations of Canterbury and York. Some important alterations have been actually made, notably the introduction of a new Table of Lessons; and possibly some further changes may be thought desirable; in fact, there is no reason why modifications of rubric should not be introduced from time to time by proper authority, for the purpose of adapting the order of the service to the wants or altered circumstances of the times. The remarks which follow are not directed against such changes as these, but are intended to guard the reader against

the dissatisfaction which may be stirred up in his mind by hearing proposals made for clearing the Book of Common Prayer from the remains of Romanism, making it more completely evangelical, and so forth. I shall be glad if the Guide to the Parish Church is able to counteract the unsettling effect of such proposals.

I shall not deal with objections to the existing Book of Common Prayer which would be urged by dissenters, except so far as they are held in common with those, who do not openly dissent, and yet in reality hold the opinions of those who do. Dissent is a very important subject, but it is beyond the scope of this book. I suppose the reader to be an attendant at the Parish Church; and my purpose is to assist him in his worship. At the same time, there may be persons dissenting from the Church of England upon no very deep grounds, who may possibly be led by the consideration of the excellence of the worship of the Church to give up their dissent, and call upon God as their fathers did of old. The Guide to the Parish Church would be happy indeed to be the guide to such as these.

"There are some of our dissenters," said Bishop Bull, "that pretend they are not against all set forms of prayer, nor do they dislike our Liturgy, merely as it is a set prescribed form of

prayer; but because there are some, yea very many things in it, that are not agreeable to the Word of God, and to which therefore they cannot assent. Now to these men all that I have to say at present is this, I will not be so lavish or extravagant in the praise of our Liturgy, as to say it is an absolutely perfect form of prayer, or so good as not to be capable in some respects to be made better; for this were in effect to say, it is more than a human composition: but this I do aver, that there is no passage in it, but what admits of a fair and candid interpretation; that there is nothing in it directly sinful, or such as that upon the account thereof a man might justify his separation from the communion of our Church. This hath been again and again unanswerably proved by the learned men of our Church. And as to the main body of our Liturgy, it is a most excellent Office and form of Prayer, most agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, that comes nearest to the primitive Liturgies; and in a word, is the best Liturgy at this day extant in the Christian world[1]."

In order that I may not be engaged with mere fancies of my own, while professing to treat of changes proposed by others, I shall found my remarks upon an actual revised Prayer-book. The book was published a few

[1] Bishop Bull, *Serm.* XIII.

years before the first edition of the Guide to the Parish Church: I do not know whether it is still in circulation; but anyhow it will serve the purpose of exhibiting the kind of changes which from time to time are seriously proposed[1]. I shall not criticize all the amendments suggested by this book; but only single out a few main topics, such as would in probability be common to all editions of the Book of Common Prayer, as reformed by reformers of this age[2].

The first change which I shall notice is the careful omission throughout the revised Prayer-book of the name *Priest*.

This is a fundamental change, and upon it other important changes depend. The name *Minister* is used throughout, the offices of

[1] "The Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England, adapted for general use in other Protestant Churches." Pickering.

[2] The reader is perhaps aware that Commissioners were appointed by King William and Queen Mary in 1689, for the purpose of proposing amendments in the Book of Common Prayer. Many amendments were suggested, but they were not carried into effect. They were not so fundamental as those introduced into the Prayer-book to which I have referred, but they indicate in some respects the same leaning, and are intended to conciliate the same class of objections. The work of this Commission is referred to in the preface to the American Prayer-book, as having suggested many of the alterations introduced into that book.

Bishop and Deacon being alike dismissed. The reason given for dropping the title of Priest, namely, that Jesus Christ our Lord is the great High Priest, and that the whole Church constitutes a priesthood, is a reason which is commonly urged in discussing this point. The same question exercised the minds of the Royal Commissioners of 1689. They did not contemplate the entire omission of the title of *Priest*, but in several places they proposed to replace it by *Minister*, and sometimes by *Presbyter*. Especially in the case of the Absolution, which is appointed "to be pronounced by the Priest alone," the name of Priest was in the Morning Service changed to Minister, and then, apparently upon further deliberation, changed back again; but in the Evening Service it was changed to Minister, and so allowed to stand. In the Communion Service the name of Priest was expunged; but it was suggested that a rubric should be added, to the effect that "The Minister that Consecrates ought always to be a Bishop or Presbyter." This rubric would evidently have distinguished the change proposed by the Royal Commissioners very widely from that adopted in the revised Prayer-book[1].

[1] An analogous remark may be made concerning the changes in the American Prayer-book.

The question whether the Book of Common Prayer is right or wrong in using the title *Priest* is very important. In dealing with it I wish on the one hand to eschew all notion of undue priestly authority, and on the other to retain that due notion of priesthood, to which beyond doubt the Church of England stands committed. I do not care to avail myself of the apology sometimes made, namely, that the term *Priest* is in fact only an abbreviation of the scriptural term *Presbyter:* the fact may possibly be true, though it is disputed: but the point is not worth arguing in this place, because things and not names are the matter with which we ought to deal, and if the word Priest were altered into Presbyter wherever it occurs in the Book of Common Prayer, little or no change would have been made as long as peculiar powers were assigned to the Presbyter as such. Hooker acknowledges that the alteration might be made; but perhaps those who object to the use of the title Priest would scarcely be pleased with the apology which he makes for its retention by the Church of England. These are his words:—

"Touching the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; the whole body of the Church being divided into laity and clergy, the clergy are either Presbyters or Deacons.

"I rather term the one sort Presbyters than Priests, because in a matter of so small moment I would not willingly offend their ears to whom the name of Priesthood is odious, though without cause. For as things are distinguished one from another by those true essential forms, which being really and actually in them do not only give them the very last and highest degree of their natural perfection, but are also the knot, foundation, and root, whereupon all other inferior perfections depend, so if they that first do impose names did always understand exactly the nature of that which they nominate, it may be that then, by hearing the terms of vulgar speech, we should still be taught what the things themselves most properly are. But because words have so many artificers by whom they are made, and the things whereunto we apply them are fraught with so many varieties, it is not always apparent what the first inventors respected, much less what every man's inward conceit is which useth their words. For anything myself can discern herein, I suppose that they which have bent their study to search more diligently such matters, do for the most part find that names advisedly given had either regard unto that which is naturally most proper; or if perhaps to some other specialty, to that which is sensibly most eminent in the thing

signified; and concerning popular use of words, that which the wisdom of their inventors did intend thereby is commonly not thought of, but by the name the thing altogether is conceived in gross, as may appear in that if you ask the common sort what any certain word, for example, what a *priest* doth signify, their manner is not to answer, *A priest is a clergyman which offereth sacrifice to God*, but they shew some particular person whom they call by that name. And if we list to descend to grammar, we are told by masters in those schools that the word *priest* hath his right place 'in him whose mere function or charge is the service of God[1].' Howbeit, because the most eminent part both of heathenish and Jewish service did consist in sacrifice, when learned men declare what the word *priest* doth *properly* signify, *according to the mind of the first imposer* of that name, their ordinary scholies do well expound it to imply sacrifice.

"Seeing then that sacrifice is now no part of the Church ministry, how should the name of priesthood be thereunto rightly applied? Surely even as S. Paul applieth the name of flesh unto that very substance of fishes which hath a proportionable correspondence to flesh,

[1] ἐπὶ τοῦ ψιλῶς προεστῶτος τῆς θεραπείας τοῦ Θεοῦ.

although it be in nature another thing. Whereupon when philosophers will speak warily they make a difference between flesh in one sort of living creatures and that other substance in the rest which hath but a kind of analogy to flesh: the Apostle contrariwise having matter of greater importance whereof to speak nameth indifferently both flesh. The fathers of the Church of Christ, with like security of speech, call usually the ministry of the Gospel *priesthood* in regard of that which the Gospel hath *proportionable* to ancient sacrifices, namely, the Communion of the blessed Body and Blood of Christ, although it have properly now no sacrifice[1]."

The burden of these remarks seems to be, that the name of *Priest* implies the office of ministering to God in holy things, and that as such it is applicable to Christian Ministers who are set apart for that purpose; and if it be objected that the name of Priest implies the offering of sacrifice, then it may be answered, that one principal service of the Christian Clergy is to minister in that office which in the Christian Church takes the place of sacrifice, namely, the Sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood, and that as ministers in this ordinance they may

[1] *Eccl. Pol.*, Book V. Chap. LXXVIII. § 2.

properly, by analogy, be called Priests. And indeed, forasmuch as throughout Christian antiquity this Holy Sacrament was called a Sacrifice, it is not wonderful that the officiating Ministers should be called Priests[1]; but while all this is perfectly true, something more seems to be wanting to complete the explanation of the name as applied to the Ministers of the Church, and to justify the application. It seems to me that those who object most strongly to the name *Priest*, do frequently themselves bear the strongest testimony to the need of the thing which the name expresses, and that by retaining the name the Church acts the part of a kind parent, who resists the waywardness of her children and will not permit them in their ignorance to destroy that, of which if taken away they would themselves be the first to deplore the want.

For the office of Priest is something different from that of Prophet, which the Christian Minister also possesses. If we look to the formula of Ordination we find the Bishop with his accompanying Presbyters communicating the Priestly office with the words, "Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins

[1] See Bingham's *Antiquities*, Book VI. Chap. XIV. §§ 14, 15. See also Hickes' *Treatise on the Christian Priesthood.*

thou dost retain, they are retained. And be thou a faithful Dispenser of the Word of God, and of His holy Sacraments;" and then afterwards the Prophetical office appears to be involved in the charge, "Take thou authority to preach the Word of God." But it is manifest that the authority to bind and loose, whatever may be its lawful limits, and the ministration of Sacraments, are things different from and additional to the authority to preach the Word: there is in the Ordination Service a distinct assertion of the priestly office in the Church, as well as of the office prophetical. The Priest also has the privilege and the duty of blessing the people in God's Name.

Now throughout the revised Prayer-book to which reference has been made, there is a consistent and uniform depression of the Priest into the mere Minister. It is not merely that the name is altered, which would be (comparatively speaking) a small matter, but that the thing is altered as well. There is no one to bless in the Name of the Lord, no one to assure the penitent of the remission of sins, no one to speak with authority of Christ's readiness to receive little children, no one to bless the bread and the cup and to deliver them without equivocation as "the Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the

faithful in the Lord's Supper." Thus under the notion of getting free from priestly assumption of authority we lose the voice of Christ in His Church, and hear in it only the echo of our own prayers. There is small gain to Christians by such a change as this; and however desirable it may be that the laity should be on their guard against priestcraft, they ought for their own sakes quite as carefully to remember that God has not left them without Priests.

I have said that many who object to the *name* of Christian Priesthood, bear testimony though unconsciously to the need of the *thing*. This will appear more clearly, if we consider the first alteration which it is necessary to make in the Church Service, in order to adapt it to a Church in which the Priesthood is defunct. Without a Priest there can be no declaration of the absolution or remission of sins: the declaration must be turned into a prayer, which but for the sake of order might be offered up by any one of the congregation. It may be said that this is what should be, that none can forgive sins but God only, that all we can do is to pray each one for himself, clergy as much as laity, that all our sins may be blotted out. Yet is it not true, that they, who chiefly spurn at priestly absolution, are amongst the most earnest in asserting that the sermons of Christian Ministers should be

mainly occupied in declaring the free mercy of God to sinners through Jesus Christ, that is, in pronouncing to God's people being penitent the absolution and remission of their sins? It is not merely unconverted sinners to whom such preaching is held to be applicable: it is maintained that for converted and unconverted alike the declaration of the atonement, the proclamation of God's act of indemnity to penitent sinners, is the most edifying subject of discourse. I do not deny that this is so: the highest privilege a Priest of God can have is to convey peace through the blood of the one Sacrifice for sin; but forasmuch as the message of peace is contained in the New Testament, and can be read by all, the desire to hear the message conveyed by human lips is an unconscious recognition of the truth that God has given authority to His Ministers to declare the remission of sins[1].

[1] The Absolution may of course be regarded as a prayer; this is implied by the words of the Rubric, "The people shall answer here, and at the end of *all other prayers*, Amen." But it is a prayer of a peculiar kind, being uttered by a Priest in his character as Priest, and being such as would have no proper meaning in the mouth of an unauthorized person.

I add the following passage from Palmer's *Antiquities of the English Ritual.* (Chap. I. Part i. § 5.)

"The sacerdotal benediction of penitents was in the earliest times conveyed in the form of a prayer to God for their absolution; but in after ages, different

The same testimony comes from the bed of every sick Christian brother, who sends for the Minister to comfort him, and pray with him, and administer to him Christ's blessed Sacrament. Why cannot he read all that he wants to know in his Bible? Why is it that he feels that he can rest upon a human voice, bidding him to be of good cheer, although it be the voice of one no better or stronger than himself? It is because the human heart bears testimony to the fitness and reasonableness of the appointment of divers orders in the Church, and of

forms of benediction were used, both in the East and West. With regard to these varieties of *form*, it does not appear that they were formerly considered of any importance. A benediction seems to have been regarded as equally valid, whether it was conveyed in the form of a petition or a declaration, whether in the optative or the indicative mood, whether in the active or the passive voice, whether in the first, second, or third person. It is true that a direct prayer to God is a most ancient form of blessing; but the use of a precatory, or an optative form, by no means warrants the inference, *that the person who uses it is devoid of any divinely instituted authority to bless and absolve in the congregation of God.* Neither does the use of a direct indicative form of blessing or absolution imply *anything but the exercise of an authority which God has given*, to such an extent and under such limitations as a Divine Revelation has declared."

It may be interesting to add in this place Calvin's views on the subject of public Absolution. In the year 1561 some of the English exiles on their return

the blessing of a Priesthood whose office it is to speak with authority on God's behalf.

I entreat the reader to consider carefully what has been said concerning the priestly office, and whether it be not true that one great feature of the Church is this, that she declares her Ministers to have authority from God to pronounce the solemn words which they use. Every body of Christians will instinctively constitute their Minister in some sense a Priest, and will regard it as his great work in some way

to England, after the accession of Queen Elizabeth, feeling scruples concerning some of the ecclesiastical rites used in the English Prayer-book, applied to Calvin for his opinion. The first point was that of Absolution, which Calvin approved. Here is the passage in which Strype records the application and the answer.

"First, whether it was expedient, after the Public Confession, to have any Absolution, declaring the gracious promise of God to repenting sinners; because there was none such used in the Church of Geneva. Calvin approves it, saying that there was none of them but acknowledged it very profitable to give to the Public Confession some singular promise to raise penitent sinners to the hope of pardon and reconciliation. He added, That from the beginning it was his mind to bring in this practice. But some feared offence would be taken at the novelty of the thing: whereupon he was too easy to yield: and so the thing was omitted; that is, to be inserted into their Office. But he wished that the people, to the Pastors whereof he wrote, were accustomed to both."

to declare to them the remission of their sins: the blessed privilege of those who worship in Church is, that the Priest is not of their own making, but has received his power and authority from "Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

What has now been said will enable the attendant at the Parish Church to detect the mistake of those who would have him believe, either that the Priest usurps that power to forgive sins which belongs to God only, or that otherwise the Absolution is unmeaning or at least might be read by anyone. It is not difficult to perceive that a man may speak in God's Name words, which have a virtue when received in God's Name, and which it would be profanity for those to use who have received no commission to use them. The objection which is made to the appointment of men to bless their brethren under the New Covenant, lies quite as strongly against the similar appointment under the Old: there is nothing to distinguish God's dealings with His Church in the two instances. Now observe what we read in the Old Testament of the office of blessing in God's Name. "At that time the Lord separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister unto Him, and *to bless in His*

Name[1]." Of course the appointment of persons with such power and authority in the Israelitish Church is no absolute proof that God has made a similar appointment in the Christian, though it affords a strong presumption that He has done so: but it quite destroys the argument, that a declaration of God's mercy by an appointed Minister is either an assumption of what belongs to God, or something which any one may do: for whatever can be said against the reasonableness of a Christian ministry having such an office, may be equally urged against the reasonableness of the Levitical priesthood having the same.

I am far from saying that the priestly Commission has never been abused by those who have professed to hold it. Unquestionably it has been abused, and very grievously. That abominable crime, which chiefly led to the reformation of religion in the sixteenth century, the sale of indulgences, that is, according to the practice of those days, the unblushing sale for money of a pretended pardon of sins, was an abuse of the power and authority granted by God to His Ministers. Neither do I desire to uphold the commission merely as a privilege of the Clergy, which they are bound to maintain

[1] Deut. x. 8.

against the assaults of the laity: it cannot be a mere class privilege: whether we call the persons officiating by the name of Ministers, or Presbyters, or Priests, it is equally true and certain, that whatever power is given them is given for the sake of the whole Church: it is their privilege to minister, or serve: they have authority to *bless* God's people. Therefore I would beg the reader to give due attention, and assign its proper weight, to the Absolution and Remission of sins, as pronounced "by the Priest alone;" to consider with himself whether the declaration of God's mercy be not one of his chief spiritual cravings; whether it be not a great privilege to be able to listen to one who can say, "I speak to you with authority in the Name of Christ;" and whether, if the declaration of absolution be deemed an unmeaning ceremony, it is not the people and clergy rather than the Church and the Book of Common Prayer which require mending.

The same principle, which in the revised Prayer-book has turned the declaration of Absolution and Remission into a general prayer for forgiveness, has of course taken away in all similar cases the authoritative, and to the people comforting, tone which according to the Church Service the Minister is entitled to assume. Thus, in the administration of the

two Sacraments, according to the revised Prayer-book, the tone of the language is changed. The Minister dares not declare in the one Sacrament that God has received the Child as His own; nor in the other can he venture to speak as Christ spoke, when He said, "Take, eat, this is My Body," and "Drink ye all of this, for this is My Blood." I do not maintain that the declaration, which the Minister is instructed to make, to the effect that God has received a child and regenerated it by His Holy Spirit, may not be abused: nor do I assert that no perversions have ever existed of our Lord's blessed assurance, that He has given us His Body and Blood, upon which to feed: but I am at a loss to perceive, how the Church is benefited by compelling her Ministers to use uncertain language concerning the great blessings which the Lord has bestowed upon her. Of course it may be said that there is no scriptural authority for the position assumed by the Church of England in her Book of Common Prayer,—if there be not, alas for the Church of Christ, which lacks some of the privileges which the Jewish Church possessed! —but anyhow, the notion that the members of the Church of England will be content to resign privileges, for which they at least are persuaded that they *have* Scriptural authority, in order

that they may join in worship with other Protestant bodies, appears to the last degree unreasonable. And I wish the attendant at the Parish Church to consider, whether the real result of most of the changes which are proposed, professedly with the design of making the Church of England more thoroughly Protestant, would not be, if they were carried into effect, to strip him and the rest of the laity of some of their most precious privileges.

In conclusion, let the reader bear in mind the purely practical design of these remarks. I do not wish to lead him to adopt any extreme views concerning the priestly office; but I do wish to help him to stand firm in the old paths and to maintain those privileges, which (as the Church of England believes) are an inheritance from Christ and His Apostles, and which the tempests and troubles of this world have not yet been able to destroy[1].

[1] Hooker's views concerning Absolution will be found in the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book VI. Chap. vi., and may be consulted with advantage. Concerning the forms used in the English Church, see Palmer's *Antiquities of the English Ritual*, Chap. IV. § 12, and Chap. VIII., in addition to Chap. I. Part i. § 5, which has already been partially quoted in the note on page 167.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE VESTURES[1] USED IN THE PARISH CHURCH.

"Let thy Priests be clothed with righteousness."
Psalm cxxxii. 9.

IN the first edition of the "Guide to the Parish Church" I wrote as follows:

"In the time of Puritan dissensions, which disturbed and for a season destroyed the Church of England, one great point of dispute was the use of the surplice in Church ministrations. It may seem to us strange that so much stress

[1] Some of the critics of the first edition of this book found fault with me for using the term *vesture* instead of *vestment*. I have done so on the authority of Mr Palmer, who gives an Appendix to his *Antiquities of the English Church*, entitled "On Ecclesiastical Vestures;" amongst which he specifies "The Vestment," which it seems is a name for that garment which is more commonly called the Chasuble.

upon difficult and controverted questions of ritual and vesture: all that I shall attempt to do will be to speak of what may be usually seen in a well-conducted Parish Church, and to offer such remarks upon the vestures used in such a Church as may be useful to the worshipper. I shall assume then that the Vestures used in the Parish Church are the Surplice, the Stole or Scarf, and the Academic Hood[1].

The Surplice is a very ancient ecclesiastical vesture; how ancient it is I do not care to inquire, but it is interesting to observe that the painted representations of clergy on the walls of the Roman catacombs exhibit very much of the appearance of English Priests and Deacons of our own day[2]. The Surplice perhaps

[1] In former editions of this book I have spoken of the Academic *gown* as commonly used for preaching. In some Churches, perhaps I might say in many, it is still used; but its legality is doubtful, and its use is constantly diminishing, owing to several causes which it would be useless here to specify.

[2] In a Charge delivered in the year 1875, I mentioned a fact, which may be with advantage repeated here. Being in Rome some years previously, I had the advantage of being introduced to one of the most notable of foreign ecclesiastical antiquaries, Monsignor de Montault. In conversation he remarked, with that ignorance of the English Church which is so common upon the Continent of Europe, "You perform all your ministrations in *black*, do you not?" To which I replied, that on the contrary the English Clergy were

was able to maintain its ground in the service of the English Church, when others were forbidden or allowed to drop into disuse, on account of its great simplicity, and its suitableness in that respect to the taste of a people unexcitable and quiet like ourselves. Its colour too is such as to make it peculiarly fitting to the purpose of a garment for God's priests, for, as has been truly observed, "white was the favourite colour in primitive times, as denoting internal purity." It should be observed however that the surplice as such is not an exclusively priestly garment: it is worn by laymen in the Colleges of our Universities, it is worn by Lay Clerks and Choristers in our Cathedrals, and of late years a "surpliced Choir" has become a not unfrequent institution in Parish Churches; but it is essentially a religious garment, it is always connected with worship, there is I believe no secular occasion whatever upon which a surplice is ever used. Hence therefore the associations of the surplice are solemn, holy, religious; and when the Clergyman appears habited in his surplice, he

habited in white. I then described the appearance of an English Priest, habited in a Surplice, with a black scarf or stole. Whereupon Monsignor de Montault exclaimed with much surprise and animation, "Why, it is the dress of the Catacombs!"

appears as a Minister of Christ, a Priest or a Deacon of Christ's Church.

The same thing may be said still more emphatically of the scarf or stole, which is a band of silk, worn over the shoulders and hanging down in front upon the surplice. The stole has been declared by high authority to be illegal; but it seems to have gained such almost universal recognition, and is so generally worn by the Clergy of all orders and all ways of thinking, that it may be safely assumed that it cannot be and will not be abolished. In fact, it is probable that if the black stole only had been used no opposition would have been made to it; coloured stoles are probably the thing really attacked; whether coloured stoles are more illegal than black, and whether it be possible to accept the one and eschew the other,—of course I mean *legally*,—are questions which it does not concern the Guide to the Parish Church to attempt to decide. Perhaps however it may be permissible to express a hope that this ancient ornament, which is not unfrequently the only mark distinguishing a Priest from a Lay Clerk, may ever be retained by and in the English Church.

An ancient custom which has of late years been more or less revived amongst us, seems to have much to recommend it, on the ground of

propriety, namely, that a Deacon should wear the stole over one shoulder, while the Priest wears it over both. Anything which marks in a simple manner the distinction between the Christian Orders, and tends to check the ignorant confusion of Priests and Deacons as being both Ministers, would seem to be useful; and on such ground the revival of this ancient custom may be rightly commended.

The University hood, when a clergyman is entitled to wear one, is a suitable adjunct to his ecclesiastical dress, though in itself not ecclesiastical at all. The hood is the mark of a liberal education; it indicates that the man who wears it is in some sense a scholar or a clerkly man, and as such it intimates that he is probably a suitable man to teach others. It is highly desirable that the clergy should be men of good education, for though a learned clergy without piety would do but little good, yet a pious clergy without learning would not be a sufficient or satisfactory substitute: piety and learning—we want them both; and it is well therefore that the clergy should ever bear with them the certificate (as it were) of having received a learned education.

Considering the amount of excitement which has been witnessed in England of late on the subject of ecclesiastical vesture and other

matters connected with the ritual and service of the Church, what is said by the Guide to the Parish Church may possibly seem to some readers imperfect and inadequate. But it must be borne in mind that it is no part of the business of the Guide to settle disputed questions, but rather to describe and explain those things which actually exist in ordinary use. In the immense majority of English Churches the vestures are such as have been specified; there are exceptions, but they are only exceptions; the condition of things may possibly be different in the future: on the one hand there is a somewhat widespread feeling amongst the Clergy and a portion of the laity in favour of a distinctive vestment for the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, on the other hand there is a probably more widespread feeling in favour of the use of the surplice in all the ministrations of the English Priest. What the result may be half a century hence it may be difficult to say, and it is unnecessary to guess; but of one thing we may be nearly certain, namely, that the general assent of the English Church and people will not be given to any vesture or ritual which is not of a quiet and sober character. There may be isolated cases in which a gorgeous ceremonial may be in harmony with the tastes of the worshippers,

and may conceivably tend to edification; but the general feeling of Englishmen will doubtless be opposed to any excess in this direction, and the recollection of the past history of the Church and loyalty to the great principles upon which she has been reformed will strengthen the conclusion which national taste suggests.

The worshipper in the Parish Church cannot too carefully bear in mind, that after all questions of dress and ritual are only of secondary importance. Different Churches, or rather different branches of the one Church Catholic, have a right to make their own arrangements, and uniformity is by no means necessary: what may be good in one Church may be evil in another: and the members of the English Church would do wisely to maintain, and to maintain thankfully, that position of moderation which they have inherited from their forefathers. One general rule may be laid down with confidence concerning public worship, namely, that all which tends to distract attention should be avoided as much as possible. People become used to almost anything by habit, but novelties attract attention and tend to prevent the concentration of the thoughts upon the one great work of worship. Hence it is desirable that changes should be made as

seldom as possible; and the regular worshipper at the Parish Church should not be driven to complain that he never knows from one Sunday to another what the form of the service will be.

This last remark however goes beyond the question of Vesture, and I conclude the chapter with the remark, that considering the stormy times through which the Church of England has passed, and the great difficulty with which an ancient vesture of any kind has been preserved, we may be thankful that things are as they are, and that the Church has been able to occupy the middle position of which George Herbert speaks, between "her in the valley" and "her on the hills[1]."

[1] See the Poem entitled "The British Church."

CHAPTER XVII.

ARCHITECTURE AND ARRANGEMENT OF THE PARISH CHURCH.

"To beautify the place of my Sanctuary."
Isaiah lx. 13.

EVERY building ought to be fitted as exactly as may be to the purpose for which it is intended; especially should this be the case with the Parish Church; no effort should be spared to make it suitable in all respects for its high ends and uses.

In determining how a building should be constructed so as to make it suitable for a Church, the following principles may be laid down without fear of contradiction.

1. A Church being a house or building in which Christians are to meet together for Common Prayer, for hearing Sermons, and for the Administration of Sacraments, the place of assembly should be suited to all these ends, not

to one or another of them, but to all. If for instance a building is merely adapted for hearing Sermons, then, so far as that portion of the public service is concerned, it may answer its purpose extremely well, but it is only partially fitted to be used as a Church. If again, the arrangement be such that only a small portion of the congregation can conveniently hear the sermon, then for this reason the building is not suitable for Church purposes.

2. A Church, being a Temple of God, ought not to be a mere makeshift, just capable of answering its purpose in some fashion, and no more. There should be no stint in the service of the sanctuary, and it is a manifest shame that men should "live in cieled houses," while the House of God is scarcely decent or habitable[1]. Moreover as the mind of man is very much affected by outward circumstances, and devotion is capable of being aided by external helps, the character of a Church should be such as to solemnize the thoughts, and assist the soul in preparation for prayer. As music

[1] It is only right to remark that the truth of this principle has been, and is, largely recognized. It appears from a return made not long ago to the House of Lords, that the expenditure on Church-building and Church-restoration in England for nearly forty years past has averaged something like a million of pounds per annum.

to the ear, so are architecture and its decorations to the eye; and though in both the one case and the other there are dangerous extremes to be avoided, still in each there are legitimate bounds within which human skill and taste may be made to do good service in promoting the worship of God.

These two principles might be laid down with propriety in any treatise upon the proper mode of building Churches: the one touches the fitness, the other the beauty, of the arrangements of God's House. But I am not writing such a treatise: I am only acting as a Guide to the Parish Church: and whatever that Church may be in point of beauty and propriety and decency, I desire to accompany the reader on his way thither, and to give him, if he be willing, some words of advice. However mean God's house may be, still it *is* His house: and the fact of His presence and the meeting in it of Christ's people for the purpose of worshipping Him, give it a glory and beauty which no external ornament could confer upon it: just as the stable of the Inn at Bethlehem was consecrated, notwithstanding its humble character, by the presence of the Holy Child Jesus.

Therefore it is with no desire of making the attendant at the Parish Church discontented with the place in which he is to worship, unless

indeed he be a wealthy person whose discontent can shew itself in liberal offerings for the renewal of God's house,—neither is it with the intention of cherishing the notion of it being impossible to worship God aright unless all external arrangements are such as they should be, that I offer here a few remarks concerning the architecture and arrangements of the Parish Church. But I think it is well that the worshipper should remember, that there is such a thing as propriety and such a thing as impropriety in matters of this kind, that external arrangements are not merely external, but have to do more or less with the inward and spiritual grace of religion. If it should chance that the reader is so placed, that his Parish Church presents little of the appearance which a Church ought to present, let him remember that where two or three are gathered together in Christ's Name, there Christ has promised to be present, that there is no place too mean to exclude the entrance of Him whose first Temple on earth was a Manger, and that the prayer of the contrite can ascend acceptably from the most unworthy building. On the other hand, if the reader's lot should be more happily cast, and the character of his Parish Church should be such as to assist rather than impede his devotions, let him be thankful for this help to his weak-

ness: and while he avoids the error of considering anything as actually indispensable for the worshipping of God except the humble and contrite heart, let him equally avoid the error of depreciating aids to human infirmity and proprieties of public worship when they may conveniently be had.

What I have to say further in this Chapter may be divided into the two heads of Church arrangement and Church adornment. Concerning the former there can be little difference of opinion: concerning the latter, opinion will vary much according to taste temperament and education.

As an example of what is meant by Church arrangement, let me refer to the usual and proper relative position of the Font and the Lord's Table. Usually the Font is found near the chief entrance of the Church, the Lord's Table is invariably placed at the East end, that is, at the end furthest from the principal entrance[1].

[1] Some controversy has taken place of late years, as about almost all other ecclesiastical arrangements, so also about the position of the Lord's Table. The Rubric which precedes the Order of the Administration of the Lord's Supper, is as follows: *The Table, at the Communion-time having a fair white linen cloth upon it, shall stand in the Body of the Church, or in the Chancel, where Morning and Evening Prayer are appointed to be said.* It may be a question how much latitude is permitted by these

There is an obvious propriety in this. The Sacrament of Baptism is the entrance into Christ's Church; the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is the highest privilege reserved for Christians of full growth and maturity. Therefore it is very instructive, and it keeps continually before the minds of worshippers the true character and relation of the two Sacraments, to have the Font and the Lord's Table so placed as to represent respectively the position of Baptism and the Lord's Supper in the Christian scheme. Sometimes (happily not often) you may see the Font placed immediately in front of the Lord's Table: this is evidently an improper place: the Sacrament of Baptism is, of course, not less real when the Font is so situated, but the several characters of the two Sacraments are thereby confounded, so far as the outward arrangement for their celebration can confound them. And so difficult is it under the most favourable conditions to impress clear views of religious things

words to the position of the Lord's Table at the Communion-time; it has been argued that they permit the Table to be placed *tablewise*, that is, East and West, instead of *altarwise*, that is, North and South; but it seems to be quite clear that the general opinion of the Church and Nation has subsided into an approval of the placing of the Lord's Table permanently *altarwise* at the East end of the Chancel, and that no attempt to vary this arrangement will meet with success.

upon the minds of the multitude, that no external aid towards doing this should be despised: any outward arrangement which tends to assist the inculcation of doctrine should be gladly adopted; any arrangement which tends to confusion should be equally eschewed.

The Font should be so placed, that when the Office of Holy Baptism is read in public it may be heard by the congregation. I have already spoken[1] of the importance of administering this Sacrament in the midst of the Congregation, as the Rubric directs; and it is evident that this wholesome rule of the Church cannot be carried out successfully, unless the Font be carefully placed with this especial purpose. In Churches (and there are such) in which the strong feelings of the Congregation render it impossible for the Clergyman to comply with the Church's rule, the position of the Font will still be a standing protest on behalf of the Rubric, and a ground of hope for the coming in of a better feeling and a corresponding practice.

It has often occurred to me, that supposing the Font to be placed at the West door of a Church, and the Lord's Table or Altar at the East end, then the Pulpit standing between the two occupies a position emblematical of the true

[1] Page 102.

purpose of preaching. We do not preach to Heathen, but to men pledged to serve Christ; and our purpose is not to make them change their profession and adopt a new faith, but to stir them up to act out their faith and to adorn their profession.

The Pulpit is in fact the guide from the Font to the Lord's Table: the preacher beckons men from the one, and points them to the other: he calls them to "go up higher" in their Christian walk, and bids them not to hang about the mere entrance of the Church, but to go on unto perfection and claim their high privilege of holy communion with Christ.

Moreover this central position of the Christian pulpit may be taken as a rebuke to those, who advance part of the way up the Church but do not go on to the end: I mean to those, and unfortunately there are many of them, who, making a profession of serving the Lord, attending public worship regularly, listening year after year to the instruction which they receive from the mouths of Christ's ministers, never perform that last command which Christ left to His disciples, to commemorate His death in the solemn breaking of bread until His coming again.

There is another matter of importance in the arrangement of a Church, namely, the seats for

the congregation. These ought to be such that each worshipper can not only sit, but kneel also. The principle is so clear, and so much has been said about it, that probably it is now seldom neglected: it was never forgotten in ancient Churches: but between ancient Churches and those of quite recent erection there was a period, during which the principle apparently so clear was strangely set at nought; you may still see Churches seated in such a manner that kneeling is all but impossible, and the effect has been the strengthening of that habit of sitting during the prayers of the Church upon which I have already severely commented in a former page of this book.

It may be added that it is necessary not merely that the seats should be such as to allow some to kneel, but that also hassocks or kneeling-stools of some kind should form part of the Church's furniture: it seems not an unreasonable thing, if other methods of supplying a Church with kneeling accommodation should fail, that each worshipper should purchase a hassock for his own particular use: the expense is trifling.

This is no small matter of which I am now speaking. It is not like the custom of turning the Chancels of Churches towards the East, which, though a very ancient and in this

country almost universal one and therefore not to be relinquished without good cause, is nevertheless not essential to the proper conduct of divine service. The manner in which a Church is arranged for sitting and kneeling involves a question of a totally different kind: a bad arrangement is directly injurious to devotion; and no effort ought to be spared to correct the errors of our forefathers in this respect, and to guard against the commission of such errors in future.

One word in passing upon the custom of building Churches so that the Chancel, or portion containing the Altar, or Lord's Table, shall point eastward. The custom is very ancient, though not without exception in early times, and is evidently connected with the primitive practice of praying with the face turned towards the East. "The ancients," says a writer upon the subject, "were not nicely curious which way their Churches stood; but yet the most usual custom was for Christians to pray towards the East; and therefore the greatest part of the Churches were built with respect to that custom[1]." In England the direction of the Chancels of our Churches has been, as it were, fixed and stereotyped by the rubric in the Com-

[1] Strabo *de Reb. Eccles.*, quoted by Bingham, Bk. VIII. Chap. iii. § 2.

munion Office, which speaks of "the Priest standing at the *North-side* of the Table."

A custom prevails in many of our Churches of turning towards the East in the rehearsal of the Creeds. Sometimes a scruple is felt in complying with this custom, and sometimes it is looked upon with decided aversion, and any attempt on the part of the Clergyman to press it, either by precept or example, is likely to lead to open opposition. This being so, it may be worth while to insert here some general account of the ancient practice of turning towards the East in solemn worship.

"There was one observation," writes Bingham, "which must not be omitted, because it was a ceremony almost of general use and practice; and that was the custom of turning their faces to the East in their solemn adorations. The original of this custom seems to be derived from the ceremonies of Baptism, in which it was usual to renounce the devil with their faces to the West, and then turn about to the East, and make their covenant with Christ; from whence, I conceive, it became their common custom to worship God after the same way that they had first entered into covenant with Him. The ancients give several reasons for this custom, but they all seem to glance at this one. Some say the East was the symbol of Christ,

who was called the 'Orient,' and 'Light,' and 'Sun of Righteousness' in Scripture; and therefore, since they must worship toward some quarter of the world, they chose that which led them to Christ by symbolical representation. As Tertullian tells us in one place, 'that in fact they worshipped towards the East, which made the heathen suspect that they worshipped the rising sun.' So, in another place, he says, 'The East was the figure of Christ; and therefore both their Churches and their prayers were directed that way.' Clemens Alexandrinus says, 'They worshipped towards the East, because the East is the image of our spiritual nativity, and from thence the light first arises, and shines out of darkness; and the day of true knowledge, after the manner of the Sun, arises upon those who lie buried in ignorance.' And S. Austin: 'When we stand at our prayers, we turn to the East, whence the heavens, or the light of heaven arises; not as if God were only there, and had forsaken all other parts of the world, but to put ourselves in mind of turning to a more excellent nature, that is, to the Lord.[1] This reason exactly falls in with that which is given for turning to the East, when they covenanted with Christ in the solemnities of baptism." And after giving several other accounts of this practice, taken from ancient authors, the learned

writer whom I am quoting concludes thus: "These several reasons have all a peculiar reference to Christ; and therefore, as Christians first used the ceremony of turning to the East, when they entered into covenant with Christ in baptism, so it is probable that from thence they derived this custom of turning to the East in all their solemn adorations. But whether this were so or not, we are sure there was such a general custom among them, and that it was founded upon some or all the reasons that have been mentioned; which is as much as is necessary to be said here for the illustration of it[1]."

I should not have thought it worth while to introduce the preceding long extract, if it had not been for the tendency which there is in some persons' minds to imagine that divers forms and ceremonies, either recognized by or traditionally preserved in the English Church, are Popish and superstitious. The practice of turning to the East is frequently so regarded; I trust, however, that what I have said may help the reader to conclude, that there is in the practice neither Popery nor superstition, but the remnant of an ancient and indeed a primitive custom of the Church of Christ, which we as

[1] Bingham's *Antiquities*, Bk. XIII. Chap. viii. § 15.

the descendants of that Church might well feel sorry to lose.

Thus much then concerning the arrangement of the Parish Church. The reader will perceive that I have by no means attempted to give a complete exposition of the subject. I have rather desired to call his attention to the fact, that an appropriate arrangement is not to be dismissed from his notice as unworthy of the attention of a Christian, and that although he is not to desert the Parish Church because it is not such as it ought to be, yet he is to be thankful if it be his privilege to worship God in a Church, in which due care has been taken to make all arrangements as suitable as possible for the great and holy ends of the building.

I now pass on to say a few words concerning the second of the two heads into which I proposed to divide this chapter, namely, Church adornment.

Church adornment, as I have already remarked, has much more to do with individual taste and temperament and education than Church arrangement. Some persons find their minds assisted in devotion by the beauty of the Temple in which they worship; other persons may feel indifferent to such external circumstances, or be even hindered by them. Nevertheless this we may say, that regarding Churches

as Temples of God no skill or pains or expense can be looked upon as wasted, if they be devoted as a sacrifice to Him.

"Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely calculated less or more[1]."

We have a good hint in the history of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, and in that of the building of the two Temples at Jerusalem, as to the manner in which a house of God should be adorned. Without discussing the extent of the analogy between God's Temple in the Jewish Church and God's Temples in the Christian, we may say that the general feeling of mankind has pronounced that the principle of making God's Temple beautiful, which was commanded under the Old dispensation, has passed on to the New. In fact, if a Church is to be regarded in any sense as a Temple built for the worship of the Most High, and not merely as a place of meeting for men, the heart of every Christian must at once pronounce, that the Church ought to be built with all the skill and be adorned with all the beauty which those who build it can command.

Again, regarding Churches not so much in the light of Temples of God, as in that of places for the religious assemblies of men, though

[1] Wordsworth.

there may be much difference of opinion as to the degree in which beauty of construction and ornament should be pursued, there is little as to the fact that some effort should be made in that direction. The question is rather how much importance shall be assigned to adornment, than whether any shall be assigned. There are, as usual, persons found to advocate the two extreme views. Some think that there can be no true worship without a beautiful Church, while there are some who think that a spiritual service requires that all beauty should be despised. The truth lies between the two extremes; and as the Church is for all, and all have not the same education and tastes and habits of thought, it would seem that a middle course should be adopted between the extreme of elaborate decoration and the extreme of unsightly poverty. In all such matters there must be a brotherly consideration of one for another, if a whole Parish is to worship "with one accord in one place:" and it should be remembered by those who may feel disposed to object to any enrichment of the externals of public worship, that taste is fluctuating, and that what may be considered as an exuberance of decoration at one time may twenty years afterwards be regarded as not exceeding the bounds which chastened taste prescribes or permits.

However, as I have said already, I am not writing a treatise on Church building or Church decoration, but rather acting as a Guide to the Parish Church, whatever that Church may be. Therefore it will be more to my purpose to remind the reader, that all ornaments and decorations of a Church are good so far as they aid in calling up solemn thoughts, as they assist to put the worshipper in a posture of devotion, as they fix his mind upon the great fact of his being in the presence of God. Who can be insensible to the quiet solemn effect produced by the "dim religious light" thrown from painted windows? Who does not own the spell of architectural beauty? Every one is familiar with the lines in which Milton expresses the effect produced by sacred buildings; and if in later days he submitted himself to the fetters of a crabbed system of religious doctrine and discipline, we may see how in his youth the poetry of his nature gave testimony on the side of beauty:—

"But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloysters pale,
And love the high-embowed roof,
With antick pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light:
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voiced quire below,
In service high and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness through mine ear,

Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all heaven before mine eyes."[1]

These lines express the legitimate ground of the application of principles of taste to the construction and arrangement of Churches. If the externals of worship be an assistance to devotion they are good; if they be a hindrance they are bad. It is obviously possible that they may offend by poverty and meanness as much as by gorgeousness and excess. Let each extreme be carefully avoided.

George Herbert describes "the Parson's Church" as being decorated with "fit and proper texts of Scripture everywhere painted;" and this is still sometimes done in village Churches. Much good teaching may be inculcated by such decoration. The same result may be produced by passages of Scripture appropriate to public worship, and the character of God's House, as that which is supposed

[1] *Il Penseroso.* This poem seems to have been written before Milton left the Church, and "sacrificed" the delights described above, as Warton says, "to the cold and philosophical spirit of Calvinism, which furnished no pleasures to the imagination." Milton's subsequent religious views, however, cannot counteract the evidence, which he here bears to the effect produced upon the mind, certainly which was produced upon his mind, by a solemn musical service in a beautiful Church.

to be due to the architecture, arrangement, and decoration of the Church. Moreover the precepts on the walls may have a wholesome effect upon the practice within the walls. The passage, "This is none other but the House of God, and this is the gate of Heaven," would be a fine protest against misbehaviour and carelessness. So would the words, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." And the precept, "Have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons," would condemn any abuse of the pew system, and any neglect of humble worshippers. Precept and practice ought to be in accordance, and the walls of the Church may become preachers of good lessons.

As I have mentioned George Herbert's direction concerning texts painted in the Church, I will quote the passage in which it occurs, and which contains his entire advice as to the condition in which the Church should be kept. "The Country Parson," he tells us, "hath a special care of his Church, that all things there be decent, and befitting His name by which it is called. Therefore first he takes order, that all things be in good repair; as walls plastered, windows glazed, floor paved, seats whole, firm and uniform, especially that the Pulpit and Desk and Communion-table and Font be as

they ought, for those great duties that are performed in them. Secondly, that the Church be swept, and kept clean without dust or cobwebs, and at great festivals strewed and stuck with boughs, and perfumed with incense. Thirdly, that there be fit and proper texts of Scripture everywhere painted, and that all the painting be grave and reverent, not with light colours or foolish antics. Fourthly, that all the books appointed by authority be there, and those not torn or fouled, but whole and clean, and well bound; and that there be a fitting and sightly Communion cloth of fine linen, with an handsome and seemly carpet of good and costly stuff, or cloth, and all kept sweet and clean, in a strong and decent chest, with a chalice and cover, and a stoup or flagon; and a basin for alms and offerings; besides which, he hath a poor man's box conveniently seated, to receive the charity of well-minded people, and to lay up treasure for the sick and needy. And all this he doeth, not as out of necessity, or as putting a holiness in the things, but as desiring to keep the middle way between superstition and slovenliness, and as following the Apostle's two great and admirable rules in things of this nature: the first whereof is, 'Let all things be done decently and in order:' the second, 'Let all things be done to edification.' For these two

rules comprise and include the double object of our duty, God and our neighbour; the first being for the honour of God, the second for the benefit of our neighbour[1]."

These directions are in some respects antiquated, but they are conceived in a sweet spirit of holiness and of love towards the Parish Church, which can never be out of date.

There is one feature of Parish Churches, especially of old Parish Churches, which may receive a word of passing notice: I mean the presence in and around them of memorials of the dead.

The practice of burying within Churches has, with rare exceptions, very rightly been forbidden; but the custom of putting up memorials has not passed away, and probably never will. Such memorials have been much abused: the walls of Churches have sometimes been made to bear inscriptions, which Christian humility and modesty, not to say truthfulness, would forbid. Nevertheless the practice may be used for edification; and the custom, now so common, of erecting memorial windows, may with ordinary care be made to add not a little to the beauty of the Church.

The practice of burying the dead in ground

[1] Herbert's *Country Parson*, Chap. xiii. The Parson's Church.

surrounding our Churches, though in many cases, in consideration of the health of the living population, very wisely forbidden, will probably long continue in our villages. It is in truth a practice which almost every one would be sorry to see discontinued: it conveys a solemn lesson; it reminds the thoughtful that the living and the dead form one Church, and are all to be judged together; and the habit of praying in the midst of the multitude of sleepers, many of them friends and relations, many known by name, many still living in memory either by their good or by their evil deeds, is calculated more than almost anything else to sober the spirits of the careless.

Perhaps in its double character, as alike connected with the rest of the dead and with the worship of the living, is to be found the explanation of the solemnizing effect of an old Parish Church. I remember a confession of this effect being once made to me by a gay thoughtless young man, who was examining the interior of a Church solely with reference to its architectural features: "I do not know how it is," said he, "but I cannot laugh in an old Church like this."

The Guide to the Parish Church would therefore remind the worshipper, that in the Parish Church he is praying in the presence of the

dead: or rather perhaps that he is in the presence of a cloud of witnesses, who have fought the fight of faith before him. Let him remember that the Church militant here on earth, and the Church triumphant in Heaven are but one; also that he is worshipping as a dying man, and that after death there is a judgment.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHURCH BELLS.

"Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts: I will go also."
Zechariah viii. 21.

THERE is another portion of the Parish Church, which comes under the head neither of arrangement nor of decoration, though in the ecclesiastical sense it may perhaps be treated as an "ornament." I refer to the Church Bells.

Bells are a very ancient portion of Church furniture, and there is much that is curious connected with their history. But all this lies beyond my purpose; it is enough that the sound of Church bells is connected with our earliest recollections, possibly with some of our happiest, and that they certainly must not be left out of consideration when we are enumerating the hallowing influence of the Parish Church.

"I hear the sabbath-bells' harmonious chime
Float on the breeze—the heavenliest of all sounds
That vale or hill prolongs or multiplies."

So writes Wordsworth; and in truth there is a singular and almost unaccountable delight in the simple music of a peal of bells, which, like the tones of an organ or the notes of a holy Psalm, speaks very powerfully to the hearts of those who are prepared to seek the Lord. Even the voice of a simple bell, though somewhat melancholy in a town or city where one expects the peal, may be eloquent and touching in the sequestered valley, when summoning the scattered dalesmen to the little chapel.

The employment of bells in the mournful office for the burial of the dead, and in the joyful celebration of marriage, so connects them with the most melancholy as well as with the most gladsome passages of human life, as to generate a feeling towards them quite peculiar, and eminently tending to give them an advantage in impressing any lesson, which they may be called upon to teach. Our forefathers seem to have been quite aware of this powerful influence; and so they devised quaint inscriptions, for their bells, marking the character which they held to belong to them. Here is one specimen.

> The living I to Church do call,
> And to the grave I summon all.

Our earliest thoughts of Church-going are

almost certainly connected with the remembrance of the bells. When we attended the Parish Church with our parents, and had no knowledge of the important work in which we were engaged, it was the sound of the bells which told us that we must be ready to go to the house of the Lord. And so the sound of the same bells in later years may well call up before us thoughts of days of comparative innocence, and may lead us to pass in review the years which have fled, and to consider what account we have to give of them, and whether we are now worshipping God with a more reasonable and acceptable service than we were able to offer to Him then.

Regarded from these and similar points of view, the Church bells may sometimes preach as good a sermon as it is possible to hear. I do not say that in practice such a sermon is always preached, or rather that the force of it is always understood. In this, as in all other cases, habit is capable of hardening the mind against the most softening influences; and it is easy, or at least quite possible, for a man to fall into such a condition of spiritual listlessness, that the sound of the Church bells is to him nothing different from any other sound. To many persons the Sunday bells are probably the means of calling to mind, not that God is to be wor-

shipped and blessings to be obtained in His House, but that the weekly holiday has come round again, and that it is to be a day of idleness, of eating and drinking and being merry. This however is not the fault of the Bells: the living voice of God's Minister is in such cases quite as ineffectual: the barrenness of the sound, when it falls upon certain dull ears, does not prevent the same sound from being Angels' music, when it falls upon those which are rightly prepared to listen to it.

To take a plainer and more practical view of Church bells, this one thing they certainly do; they make it inexcusable that people should be late in coming to Church. For half an hour probably before the commencement of the service, they warn the Parish that the hour of worship is approaching: as soon as they begin their call, every one in the Parish should think of the business that is before him: everything should be so contrived that there may be no hurry at the last, no running into Church when the Congregation are confessing their sins, no noise of trampling feet when all should be hushed and still. If those who have a difficulty in making their arrangements so as to be early, would begin to think about going to Church as soon as they hear the bells begin to ring, would not many a late comer be in his place before the

service has commenced? I suspect that this would be so: and if the Church bells have taught the people of the Parish to get themselves ready, body and mind both, in good time for the public worship of God, they have done a right good work, they have proved themselves to be the best Guide to the Parish Church.

There is one difficulty with which Parishes possessing a peal of bells sometimes find themselves driven to contend, namely, the irreverent conduct of the ringers. Bellringing is an art, and in its highest form a complicated and interesting one; and in any parish the number of those who can ring the bells will be exceedingly limited, and commonly the Parish is in the hands of those few who are fond of bellringing and who adopt it as a pastime. Now it does not follow that those who are fond of bellringing should be fond of Churchgoing for the purpose of worship; and sometimes the sight may be seen of men leaving the Church and going their way, as soon as the work of bellringing is over and the service of the Church has commenced. This indecency should be stopped at any cost, and it easily may be: better have no bells at all, or such ringing as may be effected by untaught hands, than have a production of sweet sounds coupled with the evil example of those who help

to produce them. Those who ring the bells, like the members of the Parish Choir, should consider that they are exercising a holy ministry, and should be men who delight in the service of the Sanctuary[1].

[1] During the passing of this book through the press (November, 1878), a considerable event has happened in the history of English Church Bells, namely, the solemn dedication of a peal of twelve in S. Paul's Cathedral. There was a special service of dedication, from which I extract the following concluding prayers:

"Grant, O Lord, that all they, who with their outward ears shall hear the sound of these bells, may be moved inwardly in their spirits, and draw nigh unto Thee, the God of their salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

"Grant, O Lord, that whosoever, by reason of sickness or any other necessity, shall be hindered from coming into the house of the Lord, may, when he hears these bells, in heart and mind ascend to Thee, and find with Thee peace and comfort, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

"Grant, O Lord, that all they who minister in Thy service in sounding these bells may be filled with all reverence and godly fear, and may be mindful ever of the sacredness of Thy house, putting away all idle thoughts and light behaviour, and continuing in holiness of life, so that they may stand with those who praise Thee evermore in the heavenly Jerusalem, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN."

CHAPTER XIX.

WANDERING WORSHIPPERS, HAVING ITCHING EARS.

"Never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." 2 Tim. iii. 7.

S. PAUL, writing to Timothy, says, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears[1]."

This is strong language. The meaning of the last sentence is, "they will choose teachers for themselves, because they will not endure to listen to any except those whose teaching gratifies their ears." The phrase *itching ears*, applied in this sense, has become one of common use. It expresses that tendency to seek in the words

[1] 2 Tim. iv. 2, 3.

of a teacher pleasure rather than profit, excitement rather than admonition, amusement rather than edification, which is so very common in all times and in almost all places, and which interferes so seriously with the results of Christian teaching.

Satan finds in all the varied circumstances in which we can be placed opportunity for doing us mischief. Poverty is an excuse for dishonesty and stealing; riches, on the other hand, may be the cause of forgetfulness of God, luxury, sloth, selfishness. So it is with Christian teaching in Church. If a preacher be dull in his delivery, somewhat obscure in his way of expressing himself, or have any other defect arising from natural infirmity, then it is easy for Satan to persuade people to fix their minds on these defects, to criticize his style, to depreciate his good qualities, and so to neutralize all the benefit which might have resulted from his teaching, if carefully and candidly weighed and considered. On the other hand, if a preacher have remarkable gifts, powers of oratory, clearness of style, a happy mode of expression, and the like, then it answers Satan's purpose equally well to tempt people to fix their minds upon these gifts. The only difference is that the preacher is admired instead of being criticized, lauded instead of blamed, made an object of

worship instead of contempt: but in both cases Christ is overlooked, His voice is not heard, His message is disregarded, and the people are not edified.

Doubtless there are cases in which the people are to be pitied, rather than blamed. I have already admitted[1], and indeed it is obvious to all, that the failure of sermons may sometimes be attributed to the fault of the preacher; but I am now speaking of cases in which the preacher is not to blame, where there is no carelessness concerning the greatness of his work, no inconsistency of conduct, no ground for a charge of hypocrisy, and in which nevertheless the good effect of a sermon is destroyed by the people looking to the preacher, instead of looking to the Lord who sent him. Why refer to the subject here? Why not have said all that need be urged when speaking in a former chapter about the Sermon?

Because I wish in the most emphatic manner to depreciate that practice, which in large towns especially is very common, of running about from one Church to another. Wandering worshippers are not always induced to wander by the temptation of hearing a particular preacher, as I shall have occasion to notice presently;

[1] Page 126.

but still there always has been, and always perhaps will be, a certain amount of running after preachers; going to *hear* Mr This or Mr That; and to protest against this wandering from one Church to another lies peculiarly within the limits of the duties of a Guide to the Parish Church, just because he professes to guide people not to Church in general, but to their own *Parish* Church in particular.

What do we mean by the Parish Church? The whole surface of England is cut up into districts which we call parishes: many of them are of ancient date, not a few are of quite recent appointment, and new districts are being formed by the action of the Church and the State combined year by year: within each of these parishes or districts is a Church with one or more clergymen appointed to officiate in the same; and therefore each person has a house of prayer to which it is his especial duty to resort. I am not saying that even now, after the vigorous efforts which have been made of late years to overtake former neglect, the parochial system is entirely adequate to the wants of the population: there are still, it may be feared, dark spots in which the inhabitants are practically deprived of the ministrations of the Church: but I am speaking of what the parochial system is intended to be, and what in a large number of cases it practi-

cally is; and taking this general view, I say that each person has a Church at which he ought to attend regularly, and a Clergyman whom he ought to regard as the Minister appointed for him by the Providence of God. Hence, as a general rule, the Parish Church is the right Church: there may be exceptions, and each Christian should examine carefully any exception which he may think exists in his own case; but this I should say, that though to go to any Church may be good, yet to go to the Parish Church is generally better, indeed best of all.

Time was when the temptation to wander from the Parish Church to another depended chiefly upon the qualifications of the several Clergymen as preachers. It was assumed, and was generally true, that the service in one Church was the same as that in another;—was it not so ordained by the Act of Uniformity?—and that the only possible difference was to be found in the preaching. This is so no longer: in fact churches are classed at the present time not so much with reference to the preaching which is to be heard in them, as with reference to the kind of service in which the worshippers are invited to join. Choral services, surpliced choirs, early Communions, the introduction of special vestures and ceremonies, and the like,

have much more influence than sermons upon the classification of Churches. The result has in fact been that in our largest towns, and notably in London, the parochial system has in many respects almost died out: people go very much where their taste or their ecclesiastical leanings take them, and in some instances they find an apology in the fact that the populous parishes have recently been so divided and so many new districts formed, that it is difficult to know which is the Parish Church.

Hence the wanderers in search of preachers are supplemented by wanderers in search of a service to their taste, and by those who have grown up without any of the old-fashioned feeling which binds the inhabitants of a Parish to their own Church. It is useless to grieve over changes which have been produced by changes of circumstances, and it is impossible to deny that in some places the parochial system, so far as Church worship is concerned, is practically well-nigh obsolete: but in a vast majority of Parishes, especially in rural districts, the system is still living and likely to live for centuries to come. These are the Parishes, which the Guide to the Parish Church must have principally in view; and making such exceptions as the existing state of things demands, I would repeat

the words used not long ago, that though to go to any Church is good, to go to the Parish Church is generally better, indeed best of all.

There is something in this view of our duty towards the Parish Church opposed to current notions concerning Christian liberty, right of private judgment, and so forth. Many persons seem to think, that religious liberty means the right of doing in matters which concern religion exactly as they please. But they would do well to consider, that there is a wide difference between saying that a thing is permitted by the law, and saying that it is wise and right and good to do that thing. It is permitted by the law to go up a mountain in the dark, or to ride a vicious horse, or to sleep in a damp bed; but it is not wise to do any one of these things. No sane persons would desire to enact a law compelling each person to go to his own Parish Church; yet the duty of doing so may be incumbent upon all of us. The fact is that *duty* is not a palateable word to the taste of many among us: liberty, meaning by the term freedom from restraint, is a word in much greater favour. The great Duke of Wellington said that the liberty of an Englishman consisted in doing what the law allowed him to do; and so it may be said that in religious matters submission to

the rules and wishes of the Church is the right measure of Christian freedom.

Moreover, good reasons may be given, why, independently of all considerations of duty, the service in the Parish Church is likely to be more profitable than in any other. Very much depends in public worship upon the mind of the worshipper being undistracted by other thoughts; and since we are always affected by circumstances, the less there is about us of a strange or exciting character, so much the better. Now in our own Parish Church everything is familiar: there is nothing new to see: every one seems to be in his own place: almost every face is familiar: the ways and customs are those to which we have been habituated for years; and therefore there is nothing to divert the mind from the great work in hand, but much to produce the opposite effect and to fit the soul for devotion. Then also there is a feeling of *home* (so to speak) connected with the Parish Church, which does not belong to others: perhaps we were baptized in its font, or our father or our mother is sleeping among the graves outside, or it was the scene of our first communion, or it has witnessed many vows and good resolutions made in it; or in twenty different ways it connects itself with our past history, or our spiritual conflicts, or our religious experience. All this is an aid to

devotion of which much use may be made by the wise.

Still further, I would suggest, that as concerns that part of the service, in which the personal power or weakness of the Minister is more especially shewn, I mean the sermon, great advantage is gained by a person earnestly bent upon his soul's profit from a regular attendance at his own Parish Church. Habit will overcome all peculiarities: infirmities which might be painful to strangers will be scarcely observed by those accustomed to them: on the other hand, a brilliancy, which might be fatal to the profit of a stranger "having itching ears," may cause no injury to those who have not chosen a teacher for themselves. In fact, the benefit of sermons is chiefly to be found when they are regarded as a continuous system of Christian doctrine: and it is clear therefore that sermons will by God's blessing be more likely to produce real fruit in good works and holiness of life, when they are received into a quiet mind from one whose character we know and to whose style we are accustomed, than when we leave the means of instruction by God's Providence appointed for us, and run to and fro to hear this preacher or that.

I think that sometimes the people do not sufficiently consider the labour which is involved

in the production of a real course of pulpit teaching. The clergyman who has to address the same people weekly, or oftener, has a difficult task. "Nothing short of a large magazine," writes Professor Blunt, "to draw upon will suffice for these frequent demands,—without it, the thread of his speech will soon run out the staple of his argument; and instead of a preacher he will become a spin-text. This should be looked to by us. It is unfair to exact the attention of an audience for a considerable time, and supply them with nothing to fix it. It is unfair to charge them with indifference, lukewarmness, and irreligion, when they are weary of listening to one who cannot teach because he will not learn; they have no option but to hear; they are in the condition of animals tethered upon a bare pasture; they cannot escape[1]."

There is yet one other point which ought to be noted in dealing with the question of the wisdom and propriety of wandering from the Parish Church. A parishioner has a right to worship in that Church which he has in no other. It is true that during divine service the doors of all Churches are open by law; but in his own Parish Church a man has a claim for such accommodation as the building affords, and there

[1] *Duties of the Parish Priest.*

are officers, namely, the Churchwardens, whose business it is to see that all parishioners are suitably provided for. It should never be forgotten that the Parish Church is, in its use, the property of the whole Parish; all the inhabitants, generally, have an equal right; none may be refused admission; all have a claim to have a place found for them; no distinction may be made.

Different Churchwardens exercise their power of accommodating the parishioners in different ways. Probably the circumstances of different Parishes justify a diversity of treatment. In small parishes it may be possible to appoint a sufficient seat to every family. In populous districts there may be no practicable method of doing justice to all, except that of making no appointment whatever and leaving the whole body of the Church free and open, so that each may take a place where he will or can. These varying methods of arranging the parishioners it is not the business of the Guide to the Parish Church to discuss, or appreciate: it is sufficient for him to remind his readers that the Parish Churches of England are one of her chief blessings and her chief glories, and that they belong equally and alike to rich and poor.

CHAPTER XX.

PATHS WHICH DO NOT LEAD TO THE PARISH CHURCH.

"Ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." Jeremiah vi. 16.

I HAVE spoken of the duty and advantage of worshipping in the Parish Church, as distinguished from all other Churches which may happen to be within reach. But besides those paths which lead to strange Churches, there are others leading to places of public worship which are not Churches within the meaning of the word as used in this book; and concerning these paths it may be useful to say a few words.

It might seem that according to my principles I have nothing to do with such paths; because I have ever professed to write for those, who, whether earnestly or not, do nevertheless attend the public worship of the Church. But it will be found, that without abandoning the principles which have been professed, something may be

said of a useful practical nature to those who go to the Parish Church, concerning those bye paths which lead off the high road to the various houses of dissenting worship.

Let the reader understand therefore, that whatever is contained in this chapter is written with the intention of producing a practical effect upon his conduct as a worshipper in the Parish Church. Nothing severe or unkind will be said of Romanists, or Baptists, or Independents, or any other class of Christians. There may be occasions upon which it may be necessary to enter into controversy with each or with all of these classes; but this is not one of those occasions. Indeed the last place in the world, in which the dust and smoke of controversy should be found, is the Parish Church; and the last person to encourage the spirit of controversy should be he, who endeavours to act as a guide to his brethren on their way thither.

The fact that there are amongst us divisions concerning religious matters, and a large number of paths such as those described at the head of this chapter, must have some effect upon the mind of the worshipper in the Parish Church: what I desire to do is to give a few hints as to what this effect ought to be.

In the first place, the existence of dissent should lead the worshipper in the Parish Church

to study the beauty and excellence of the service in which he is in the habit of taking part. He ought to be able to give a reason, both to others, if asked, and to his own judgment, why he continues in the old paths. It is hardly enough that he continues in those paths merely because they are old, for this reason might be urged in justification of a lazy acquiescence in every kind of abuse. He ought to have a growing conviction of the superior advantages of the Church service beyond those which are to be found in any dissenting form of worship, of the blessing of a Liturgy breathing at once the spirit of Scripture and that of the primitive Church. He ought to have a conviction that the Church of England is a true branch of Christ's Holy Catholic Church, and a feeling of assurance that the Church of England is in the right and the Church of Rome in the wrong, with regard to those points which have separated the one from the other.

The case of the Church of England is well stated in the words of Bishop Ken, which he wrote in his last will—"As for my religion, I die in the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Faith, professed by the whole Church before the division of East and West: more particularly I die in the Communion of the Church of England, as it stands distinguished from all Papal and Puritan

innovations, and as it adheres to the doctrine of the Cross."

The clearness and completeness of a man's views with reference to the position of the Church of England will of course depend to some extent upon his opportunities of study, and the amount of his education: but every worshipper in the Parish Church, however humble he may be, if he be but earnest in his worship, may so study his position as a member of the Church of England, as to satisfy himself of the duty and the privilege of worshipping in her communion rather than in any other, either "on the hills" or "in the valley."

It is possible moreover for a Christian to hold very strong views concerning the privileges he himself by God's grace enjoys, without having the slightest desire to judge his neighbour, or the smallest amount of uncharitable feeling towards him. I may feel that I would not for worlds desert my position as a member of the Church, and may shrink from the notion of attending a schismatical worship as I should shrink from any other conduct which I consider to be wrong; and yet not pronounce any opinion upon the conduct of those who act differently. Of course I must consider such conduct mistaken, the fact of my avoiding it myself proves as much as this: but I may very well avoid all

attempt, and even all wish, to pass a judgment upon conduct, for the full estimation of which I have not the necessary information, and which God who seeth the heart can alone judge aright. In fact, if the Church of England occupies the ground which she professes to occupy, it is impossible to belong to her Communion and to think lightly of the privilege: nor do I perceive how a member of another communion can respect the worshipper in the Parish Church, if he be ignorant or indifferent concerning the nature of the ground upon which he stands[1].

One principal thing, which the worshipper in the Parish Church ought to remember, is, that the estimation in which the Church of England will practically be held, depends much upon the manner in which her services are performed, and that the proper performance of them depends upon the laity, almost as much as upon the Clergy. However certain it may be that the descent of the Church of England from

[1] The complaint is made by the Bishops and Clergy of the Colonial Churches, that emigrants professing themselves members of the Church of England are not unfrequently grossly ignorant of the principles of the Church to which they belong. It may be not difficult to assign reasons for this, but the result ought not to be. Churchmen going to the Colonies ought to be able to say why they are Churchmen, and their education at home ought to enable them to do so.

the Church of the Apostles is pure and undeniable, however sure the validity of her Orders, however unreasonable the scoffs of Romanists on the one hand and of Protestant Dissenters on the other, still practically she will or will not be influential in the country, and will or will not command respect, according to the manner in which her principles are exhibited in action, especially according to the way in which the Book of Common Prayer is interpreted by the worship of the Parish Church. It is not of course intended to deny that the influence of the Church will depend upon other things, such as the holy lives of the Clergy, the example set by them and their families, their learning, zeal, and activity in the pastoral work of their Parishes: but the point which comes out most prominently and distinctly is the public service, which all may witness, and in which all are invited to join. With regard to this I wish to press upon my lay brethren that they must not throw the whole responsibility upon the Clergy: the Laity have much of the welfare of the Church in their keeping; and however great a misfortune carelessness on the part of the Clergy may be, it is increased tenfold when the Laity follow the example.

Let us look for a moment upon that portion of a layman's duty which the subject of this

book brings before us; I mean a layman's duty as regards the mode of conducting the worship of the Parish Church, and its relation to those who dissent from the principles of the Church and hold aloof from her worship.

The great end is, that the worship should be such as to command the respect of those who have unfortunately seceded; to win them back, if possible, by persuading them that they have gone the wrong way; to let the light of the Church so shine before men, that they may see her excellence and glorify God. Now in whose power does this lie? Partly in that of the clergyman no doubt,—perhaps chiefly with him,—but certainly not wholly. For instance: if the Clergyman is allowed to read the service without an Amen or a response being heard, and if the service consequently, instead of being *common* prayer and expressing the warm feelings of Christians, is almost a soliloquy by the Minister and as cold as the pavement of the Church, whose fault is this? Or if the singing be not hearty,—whose fault is this? Or if the Church present to the eyes of angels, not the spectacle of penitents and worshippers meekly kneeling on their knees, but that of easy-going sinners lounging in pew-corners,—whose fault is this? Or if the dress of the younger attendants at the Parish Church be fitter for a fair or a dance than

for the house of God,—whose fault is this? Or if the chief service of the Church, the solemn sacramental commemoration of the Lord's death, be generally and scandalously neglected in any Parish,—whose fault, I ask, is this?

Observe, I am not speaking of these things so much as evils in themselves, evils to the attendants at the Parish Church, but as evils with reference to the light in which the Church of England will be viewed by those without. Careless, irreverent, ungodly behaviour on the part of those who go to Church is the greatest encouragement possible to those who dissent from the Church. Of course it may be said that the wisest conduct for those who find fault with the practice of the Church is not to absent themselves, but to go and set things right by their influence and by their own better example: this is very true, and I wish that all those who complain of the Church would rather try to mend her than to pull her down; nevertheless, taking things as we find them, we are bound as Churchmen to admit, that any indecency in the worship of the Parish Church will always afford, whether rightly or wrongly, a handle to those who have left the Church and set up another worship for themselves.

The prevalence of dissent, however much we may regret it, may at least have one beneficial

effect upon the minds of worshippers in the Parish Church. They may properly be moved with a godly jealousy, and may determine that so far as lies in their power, the worship of the Church shall be hearty and decent and comely. Life of a certain kind will always be thrown into the various forms of dissent by the very fact that they *are* forms of dissent; and there is a corresponding danger to the Church, lest she should be lost in the spirit of easy routine, lest her forms should become formal, lest she not only should be venerable in her antiquity, but should also suffer from the coldness and stiffness of age. I wish to call the attention of worshippers in the Parish Church to this danger, and to beg of them to take means to avoid it.

It may be imagined that a careful upholding of the principles of the Church involves want of charity towards those who dissent. I have already said, that I can hardly imagine how any one can hope for the respect of those who differ from him, if he is himself manifestly careless about his principles: but in addition to this it should be urged, that if any person thinks that dissent from the Church is not a trifling matter but a very serious one, and that his brethren by dissent are depriving themselves of great privileges which they might enjoy, then it is

charitable towards them, to shew the high estimate he entertains of his privileges, and to prove by his conduct how anxious he is not to enjoy his privileges alone.

The signs of the times seem to some to indicate possible changes in the position of the Church of England, and consequently of each Parish Church. Since the first edition of this book was published the Irish Church has been disestablished; and there are not a few, who would desire to see, and who leave no means untried to bring about, a similar change with regard to the Church of England. The two cases are very dissimilar, and it by no means follows that what has been done in the sister island will be done in our own; it seems to be generally believed that such a change, even if possible in the future, is not immediately impending. I only refer to the possibility of change, for the purpose of saying that no question concerning the future of the Church of England ought to affect our present conduct. What changes and trials may be in store for her in the good Providence of God, none of us can foresee; but we cannot be wrong in believing that she has a great work on her hands, and great responsibilities, and a future full of hope. Whatever may be her temporal condition we must not be faint-hearted concerning her

spiritual: the jealousy of opponents, or the folly of her own children, or the neglect of privileges, or even the change of opinion brought about by time, may unsettle temporal foundations and dissolve the present bonds which connect the Church with the State; but no human power can shake that spiritual foundation upon which the Church of Christ stands: and the Church of England, it may be hoped and believed, will still be the Church of England, even if as great a revolution should be brought about as the most sanguine of her foes, or the most ill advised of her friends, could desire.

Meanwhile the writer of this little book is thankful to be permitted to be the guide to the old Parish Church, with all its associations and all its traditions and all its freedom of worship. "No man having drunk old wine straightway desireth new; for he saith, The old is better[1]!" The Guide to the Parish Church may be aware of cracks in the dear old walls, and may be able to point out to Visitors points in which a little mending and restoration may be required; but he is sure that the foundation is good, that the walls are substantially sound, and that even the apparent faults should be treated only by loving hands.

[1] S. Luke v. 39.

CONCLUSION.

AND now I will bring this little book to an end, and bid the reader farewell. "We have taken sweet counsel together, and walked in the house of God as friends,"—I trust not without profit. I can scarcely hope to have given the attendant at the Parish Church all the explanations and advice which he may desire; but at least I have endeavoured to help him, and I am sure he will give me credit for goodwill and sincerity.

Let me say in parting, that it is not the private and spiritual benefit of the worshipper alone, which results from a due study of the principles and intended practice of the Church of England. If the Church of England be what she professes to be, the interests of the whole nation are very much bound up with her welfare; and every one who contributes to the great work of making her services such as they should be, and herself loved by her children and respected by those who have deserted her, is

contributing to the spiritual welfare of the whole body of his brethren, and it may be to their temporal welfare too.

That late years have witnessed an astonishing increase of zeal and activity and determination to redeem past neglect and to preach the Gospel to the poor, few will be bold enough or disposed to deny. Whatever may be in the future, the present is our own; and the duty of each member of the English Church is to hold fast such things as he has, to make the best of his privileges, and to adorn his profession. The more earnestly each member, however humble and individually insignificant, devotes himself to the performance of this duty, the greater will be the hope of God's increased grace and blessing to the Church at large.

Reader, the aim and (if I do not deceive myself) the spirit of the book which you have now perused are expressed in the words of the hundred and twenty second Psalm, which we will repeat together in parting. It would be a blessed thing for England, if by any means the feeling which pervades it could be infused, more completely than it is, into the hearts of all her children.

I was glad when they said unto me : We will go into the house of the Lord.

Our feet shall stand in thy gates : O Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is built as a city : that is at unity in itself.

For thither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord : to testify unto Israel, to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord.

For there is the seat of judgment : even the seat of the house of David.

O pray for the peace of Jerusalem : they shall prosper that love thee.

Peace be within thy walls : and plenteousness within thy palaces.

For my brethren and companions' sakes : I will wish thee prosperity.

Yea, because of the house of the Lord our God : I will seek to do thee good.

GLORY BE TO THE FATHER, AND TO THE SON : AND TO THE HOLY GHOST ;

AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING, IS NOW, AND EVER SHALL BE : WORLD WITHOUT END.

AMEN.

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